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Keyes soccer camp draws over 100 youngsters

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By any measure, last week's Brendan Keyes Academy Soccer Camp was a resounding success.

"We had more (campers) than we've ever had," said Keyes, the former Houston Hurricane professional soccer player. "We had over 100 campers," he added.

The camp was held at Resoft Park in Alvin, with several expert instructors and counselors on hand.

That included former Irish Women's National soccer coach Noel Mulhall and English coach Jerry Campbell. Both flew in from Europe especially for the camp.

Mulhall and Campbell enjoyed the experience once again, having been at the camp last year but were more than pleased about the larger turnout.

"I enjoyed it thoroughly," said Campbell. "I had a great time. They were all great kids."

Keyes also had several expert coaches and trainers on hand for the boys and girls.

Each camper received 15 hours of training from the experts. Various drills in all forms were employed during the 5-day camp.

In addition, the campers had photo-ops with Mulhall, Campbell and Keyes, along with other instructors.

At the end of the camp prizes were given out at the pizza and pasta awards party held at Al Capones Grill in Webster. Mulhall also praised the kids during the Capones pizza party.

Keyes has had his soccer academy for several years in Alvin and has trained some of the best young soccer players in the area.

Besides playing pro soccer, Keyes is a sanctioned professional coach from the USSF and FAI Football Association of Ireland. He also has soccer management and scouting sports management credentials.

The large camp turnout was very pleasing to Keyes.

"It was fantastic," he said. "We really had everything arranged well. We had six grids and we rotated with instructors at each grid. It was put together very well."

The campers became savvier as the instructors taught them soccer tactics at every grid.

There were 16 goalies who attended the camp and each learned the moves to keep the ball away from the nets, Keyes added.

"It couldn't have gone any better," he said.

Keyes is already planning next year's camp.

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Former Irish National Women's coach Noel Mulhall goes over the finer points of soccer with some of the young and enthusiastic girl campers.

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