

## Darien youth players enjoy hockey camp with New York Islander star Moulson

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STAMFORD -- Although this week's five-day youth hockey camp at the Stamford Twin Rinks was small in terms of the number of participants -- six skaters and a goalie on Tuesday -- it has the potential to be big in a player's developments.

Those campers who passed on outdoor summer activities and opted to lace up the skates were tutored by Matt Moulson of the New York Islanders, a 29-year-old 30-plus goal scorer for three of the last four seasons (he scored 15 goals during last year's strike-shortened season).

"I think when you're younger, no matter how big or small the group is, we can teach them a lot of things that we've learned over the years," Moulson said. "It's tough to make yourself better in one week, but you learn some things that you can carry out. They can take that knowledge, use it and continually try to get better."

Moulson himself attended youth camps as an up-and-coming youth player, and he indicated that you never stop learning in the game of hockey.

"I went to hockey camps my whole life, and I still see guys for help now," Moulson said. "You never stop learning the game. I have a chance to help a younger person, and it's good to help them any way I can."

Darien's Christian Nawrocki said that he planned to make the most out of the rare opportunity to learn from an NHL superstar.

"I just wanted to get the ice time, and it's Matt Moulson," said Nawrocki, a 10-year-old right defenseman. "It's all about the ice time, and I just really want to be a better hockey player."

The five-day camp runs from 5:30-7:30 p.m. every evening, and Moulson plans on changing up the activities and drills each night to keep the camp fresh and the players entertained.

"It's usually different. We worked on a lot of things yesterday. We did a lot of scoring and skating drills," Moulson said. "It depends on who we have out there. We had a couple out there yesterday, and they worked hard. In a smaller group, it can actually be more of a benefit to them."

His strategy seems to have the approval of at least one camper.

"You can always get better. I think he's helping a lot," Nawrocki said. "I bend my knees more. It helps me get more agility, more speed when skating backwards when it's 3-on-2 or 2-on-1."

The 2012-13 NHL season marked Moulson's first venture into the Stanley Cup Playoffs, as his No. 8-seeded Islanders met up with the top-seeded Pittsburgh Penguins in the opening round, falling four games to two in the best-of-7.

"There was a lot of energy. Every single play is that much more important, and everyone is a little more amped up than the regular season," Moulson said. "It was a different level, a good experience and hopefully we go further this year."

The Ontario native is hopeful that the experience will benefit his squad in the long run, as the Islanders, which will move to their new home in the Barclays Center in Brooklyn next season, will look to do more than just make the playoffs in the 2013-14 campaign.

"A couple bounces here and there and we could have walked out of that first series, and then you never know what's going to happen," Moulson said. "We can build on the things we did right and make sure we get back to that."

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