



Photos by KAREN TAPIA / Los Angeles Times

Gernot Glockler, 13, of Austria, above, gets a boost from Andy Houghton of Newport Beach during a game of wheelchair hockey. Roman Hofer, 12, right, practices puck control at Fullerton rink.

FULLERTON

20 Disabled Visitors Get Taste of Southland

A group of 20 disabled or terminally ill Austrian children are getting an overview of Southern California.

The children, most of them 10 to 17 years old, are here through a special program and would otherwise "have no chance to see California," said Werner Kriess, an Austrian journalist accompanying them. "They enjoy it so much. . . . It's another world."

The children spent Monday morning at Stuart's Roller World in Fullerton with players and coaches on the Anaheim Bullfrogs professional roller hockey team. They will fly back to Austria today after visiting Disneyland.

Gernot Glockler, 13, played hockey despite being confined to a wheelchair because of muscular dystrophy.

Overall, Glockler said, he has been impressed with the accessibility of public places for the disabled in the United States but said he would not want to live here.

"I don't like much traffic," Glockler said. "I don't like to live in cities."

Andy Houghton, a Newport Beach resident who participates in a number of wheelchair sports after losing use of his legs in a motorcycle accident, coached Glockler in wheelchair hockey.

"They're just normal kids," Houghton said. "When you think

North

about some of the things we did when we were kids, some of these kids won't get to do them."

—STEVE SCHEIBAL

