



### **...Guess which ones are most competitive.**

Camp Chateaugay has 60+ activities that might run in a given week, between land and water. Many of them are sports.

We have basketball, golf, high ropes, water skiing, wakeboarding, sailing, archery, climbing wall, horseback riding, and a bunch more.

You know what the most competitive thing at camp is?

Not soccer. Not baseball. Not tennis.

It's Gaga. Yes, I'm counting Gaga as a sport. Go watch one game and tell me it's not.

The runners-up on that list? Maybe ping pong. Possibly tetherball.

If there's a documented competitive philosophy at camp, this pretty much explains it.

### **A Competitive Angle**

Gaga, ping pong, tetherball and other games like them exist at the perfect level of competition.

Nobody's going home to brag about being the best tetherball player at camp. Nobody's stacking their college resume with Gaga ball championships. Nobody's posting their ping pong record on social media.

These activities are competitive for competition's sake at exactly the right level.

Compare that to the world kids live in now.

So many things are hyper-competitive. Travel sports teams with rankings and showcases. School pressure around grades and college admissions. Social media turning everything into a contest. Even family game nights might turn into mini-meltdowns.

It doesn't have to be this way. We've seen it. At camp, I'm here to tell you, we offer something different. Competition where kids learn to manage their own competitive feelings without dialing the stakes all the way up to the nth degree.

### **Mastering Your Internal Drive**



On a high level, we think of Camp Chateaugay as a non-competitive environment.

What that really means is we're not creating competition between kids. We're creating space for kids to understand their own competitive impulses.

Everyone has competitive feelings. That's normal. That's healthy. The question isn't whether or not you feel competitive. The issue is how you handle those feelings.

Can you push yourself without tearing others down?

Can you try your hardest and still be a good sport when you lose?

Can you want to win and still celebrate when someone else does?

It means learning to compete with yourself.

We have 60+ sports, though not to compete with the camp that has 70+. We have them because we can offer high-quality instruction.

Kids arrive having never tried archery. They go home hitting targets.

Kids come to camp not knowing how to water ski. They leave having stood up on those very skis.

Kids show up not knowing all the rules to Gaga (there are lots, kids love making up different versions). They leave having moved in and out of the Gaga court so much they don't remember any win-loss record.

It's about being YOUR best, not being THE best. Again, it's healthy competition with and within yourself.

## **Handling The Feelings**



Special days like Olympic Day or Army/Navy Day split camp into teams. There's spirit, competition, silliness.

But, if you don't want to be part of these larger events? That's okay too.

Out there in the world, there seem to be two extremes: hyper-competitive culture on one end, participation trophy culture on the other.

Camp is the sweet spot in between. And that's where the real growth happens.

Kids learn to try hard and handle a little disappointment if it happens. They learn to celebrate others' success when it's time. They learn that wanting to win is ok, but also that not-winning doesn't make you a failure.

That's picking up an internal competitive drive while being part of a community built around fun.

## **What Your Child Experiences**

Your child may feel competitive at camp.

They'll want their team to succeed. They'll try hard.

They'll also lose sometimes. They'll watch someone else win. They'll have to manage those feelings in real time.

They'll learn that they can handle it, all different versions of it.

And when it's time for another game of Gaga, or tetherball, or ping pong or whatever game they choose, they'll know they can handle whatever happens next.

See you this summer.

Mitch