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TEACHING TUESDAY

KASHIMA GATALYMPIC

JUNE 6, 2017

The Kashima Gatalympic take place every year from late May to early June, and is considered one of Japan's craziest sporting events. Held on the Kashima mudflats in Saga Prefecture, participants take part in a series of unique games that leaves them completely covered in mud.

The first Gatalympic was held in May 1985, in a bid to bring transportation to the city of Kashima. The mudflats that stretch along the city's shorelines are the biggest in Japan, and the city opted to make use of them. Silly events such as mud sumo, 25 meter dash (waist deep in mud), bicycle races, and more all take place during this daylong event. Admission is free and all are welcome to join!

In addition to providing a fun, mud filled event, the Gatalympic has also improved the conditions of the mud flats themselves. Once viewed as an eyesore, the conservation and condition of the mudflats has improved dramatically as they have become an important and valued symbol of Kashima.