

Bull Sumo Arena: Nakusami-kan

This all-weather arena was constructed in 2012 to hold *togyu* (bull sumo) events. A tradition dating back to the eighteenth century, *togyu* initially emerged as a form of entertainment, an escape from the fatigue of farmwork. Today it remains immensely popular, attracting enthusiastic spectators of all ages who come together to cheer on their favorite bulls. Unlike bullfighting in Spain, bull sumo pits the bulls against each other, spurred on by “coaches” known as *seko*. A referee presides over the matches and ultimately determines which bull is victorious, though most matches conclude when one bull turns away or retreats. Like sumo wrestling, these matches can be over in mere seconds or extend to many minutes. *Togyu* bulls can weigh more than a ton, and are fed and trained with much care and attention, focusing on building up their strength, stamina, and technique.

Exhibits and Theater Room

To the left of the bulls’ entrance is an exhibition and theater room, featuring videos, posters, photos of legendary bulls, and other *togyu*-related items. Admission is ¥100 for children under 15, ¥200 for 15 and up.

Tournament Schedule

Tournaments are held here about 10 to 15 times throughout the year. The annual tournaments, which decide the champions of the entire island of Tokunoshima, take place in January, May, and October.