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JUNE 2013

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Radical Sabbatical

Bike the length of Japan, then tackle Iceland ... with kids?



AFTER 14 YEARS at Intel, Charles Scott needed a break. "I wanted to spend less time responding to an overwhelming flow of work and more time

creating lasting memories," he writes in his book, *Rising Son*. Charles' idea of a sabbatical? Riding a bike 2,500 miles across Japan ... with his 8-year-old son, Sho. Two years later he quit his job and was at it again, this time with Sho and his 4-year-old daughter, Saya, in tow, on a 1,500-mile trek throughout Iceland.

➤ **Japan started rough.** Sho threw temper tantrums that made me question everything. So I said, "Look, think of yourself as a team member. I need you. I can't do it by myself." He pulled his own weight after that.

➤ **We challenged sumo wrestlers** in a mountain village. The guy I battled spun me over his head, slammed me to the ground and broke my toe. Fortunately, cycling shoes have a hard base, so you don't have to wiggle your toes, but it still hurt while riding. The lesson? Never take on a sumo wrestler.

➤ **Sometimes Sho derailed my plans**, like one morning in Kyoto. It's the ancient capital of Japan, so I had historical sites I wanted to visit. Sho persuaded me instead to go bowling.

➤ **Our scariest moment** came while cycling over the Japanese Alps. Running out of daylight with nowhere to camp, we pushed toward the summit on narrow, steep roads. Just as we lost light we spotted a hikers' hut at the top with a gorgeous view of the range. I never exhaled so deeply.

➤ **Was it hard?** I asked Sho this after we cycled the entire length



Was it hard? I asked Sho after we cycled the length of Japan for 67 days straight. "Kinda," he says.

of Japan for 67 days straight. His response: "Kinda."

➤ **Iceland is no joke.** With me on my bike, Sho on a connected trailer-cycle behind me and Saya in a pull trailer behind him, we were below a volcano when suddenly all we could smell was sulfur. We passed safely, but were told later the volcano triggered a glacial flood and washed out the road we'd just pedaled. That was a wake-up call. — DAVID LAHUTA

COURTESY CHARLES SCOTT; OPPOSITE: JON WHITTLE (3)

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