



No one can escape a photo with me, not even Erik Seidel.

himself, Dean Cain, who is to my left. On my right is Professor, Banker and Suicide King author Michael Craig, who had just recently knocked me out in 81st place from the \$750k Full Tilt weekly championship. Also at the table is Adam “roothless” Levy and my new “unimportant” friend Isaac Haxton. A short time later, Dean and Michael are in a hand when the king of hearts hits the board on the turn. I ask Dean if he knows who Michael is. When he replies he doesn’t, I share the title of Michael’s book and point to the suicide king on the board. Dean calls Michael down anyway and loses most of his chips. A short time later, Dean is out and replaced by none other than dubious Rounders star and eight-time WSOP bracelet winner Erik Seidel. Moments later, the co-organizer of the event, Don Cheadle, joins our table.

Phil Hellmuth is wandering the room, announcing the action. Each time a player goes all-in and is called, the dealer must stop and summon the ESPN cameras, which also seems to summon Phil as well. Our table is full of action junkies and we are all-in every other hand, therefore we’re seeing far fewer hands per abbreviated levels (20 minutes vs. normal 120 minutes for other WSOP events). Two hours deep and with half the field already eliminated, I ponder a

preflop raise from a guy who was on a championship World Cup team a couple of years ago. I decide to shove with A-K and he insta-calls with A-A. As I wait for Phil and the cameras, I know Phil will relish me losing this hand, as I busted off his Best Damn Poker Show with the same hole cards. Sure enough, moments later I’m on the rail and searching my pockets for the tickets to the after-party.

The after-party is on the Strip at Pure, the Caesars Palace nightclub. Charles Barkley does an ill-advised tribute to Michael Jackson and I search for the exit, but end up meeting a poker-playing attorney/hottie who wants to play me heads-up. Being a man of the people, I go all-in on this one.

FUTURE DIRECTOR?

The next day I meet Full Tilt pro Rafe Furst’s brother-in-law, who is a potential director for the film. After a great meeting, we head to dinner with Rafe and some of the Tiltboys. When they learn there is another film project in the works with the word Tilt in the title, they begin to regale me with their exploits. Certainly someone should explore their adventures as a potential cinematic work. Perhaps there’s a sequel to Life on Tilt here somewhere. Life Beyond Tilt, anyone?

‘ARE YOU SOMEONE IMPORTANT?’ I ASK. ‘NO, ARE YOU?’ HE REPLIES

My poker-playing attorney/hottie flies back to Chicago and I decide to relax a bit in the comfy confines of the Gold Coast’s poker room. However, before long I find myself at a no-limit table with 2007 WSOP Main Event champ Jerry Yang and a couple of his relatives, along with 2006 WSOP Main Event champ Jamie Gold’s manager. We have a great time splashing some chips around and just enjoying some good old-fashioned poker away from the lights and frenzy across the parking lot at the Rio.

The next day I need to go sweat my friend Kenna James on the rail. Kenna wrote the foreword for Life on Tilt and it’s tough to find anyone who has a bad word to say about this man. Unfortunately, today is not his day as he is holding J-J against a board of A-A-J...of course his opponent has A-J. Kenna loses the minimum on this hand, but – amazingly – a few hands later he once again has J-J vs. A-J. This time his opponent is suited and hits the flush on the river to cripple him. We share a long, quiet walk down the corridor of the Rio, away from the action in the Amazon and Brazilian poker rooms.

I start to tally my film budget. I began the trip \$5,000 in the hole for Ante Up. I won about \$2,000 in cash games and a small tournament. So...let me see...carry the one... It looks like I’m a shade under \$12 million shy of what I need to make this film. Time for me to catch a flight back to New York and get to work. ♠

Next issue...the business of Hollywood...raising millions for a film in a down economy.