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**Player Profile: Erik Seidel**

**By Kenneth Bateman**

Modest and unassuming, Erik Seidel is a professional poker player, one of the world's best. In fact, he is one of a very select few players who have won multiple World Series of Poker Bracelets, (he has won seven WSOP Bracelets as of this writing). Erik is the only WSOP tournament player in the past twenty-five years to win three consecutive years running:

· 1992 – \$2500 Limit Hold `em – \$168,000 · 1993 – \$2500 - Omaha 8 or Better – \$94,000 · 1994 – \$5000 - No-Limit Hold `em – \$210,000

Seidel is additionally ranked among the top ten money makers in World Series of Poker Tournament play, his standing kept intact by his \$611,795 victory in the 2005 WSOP Tounament, in which he outlasted and overcame 1,402 competitors.

Although Erik is held in high regard in the world of professional tournament poker, poker, his first love now, was not his first love thirty-five years ago, when in 1970 he left college to pursue a career as a professional backgammon player.

Playing backgammon at New York's legendary Mayfair Club, Erik entered a backgammon tournament in Las Vegas, where playing a few games of low-limit poker peaked a new interest in the game. Back at the Mayfair, Erik and a number of fellow backgammon players, Paul Magriel, Jason Lester, Steve Zotolow and Howard Lederer among them, began a regular series of poker games, eventually leading the boy's into professional poker tournament competition.

During this time Erik worked as a trader on Wall Street to supplement an erratic income from Backgammon. Eventually, backed by friends, Erik felt confident enough to enter a World Series of Poker Tournament in Las Vegas.

Erik's initial foray into the WSOP was discouraging, to say the least. Entering one-table satellite play for the Main Event, Erik lost every one, nine in all. Not deterred by his losses, Erik bought into the Main Event, and his skillful play enabled him to finish second only to the winner, the famed Johnny Chan.

## Player Profile: Erik Seidel

As it so happened, a movie about poker was being filmed at the time of the tournament called "Rounders." The film starred Matt Damon, and it was about a reformed gambler who returned to playing big stakes poker to help a friend pay off threatening loan sharks. The movie's director, John Dahl thought it would be interesting film the playoff between Chan and Seidel. The final hand brought a measure of movie fame to Erik and Johnny Chan as it was included in the film - much to Seidel's embarrassment, he lost, (pair of queens to a straight).

- Only four players in all of WSOP Tournament competition have won more bracelets than Erik Seidel.
- 2005 WSOP Event #9 - No-Limit Hold'em - 1st place – \$611,795
- 1999 WSOP Main Event - 4th place – \$279,500 · 1998 WSOP Main Event - 2nd place – \$280,000 · World Poker Tour - Season #3 - Doyle Brunson North American Poker Championship - 4th place – \$165,000

Erik currently lives in Henderson, Nevada, (just outside of Las Vegas proper), with his wife and daughter. His favorite ways to relax are listening to music and playing tennis.

Kenneth Bateman writes numerous articles on the subject of poker and its players. To read more player profiles, visit

<http://www.xlpoker.com>

## Player Profile: Clonie Gowan

### By Kenneth Bateman

Her real name is Cyalona Gowen because she was born during a tropical storm. Clonie grew up in Kiowa, Oklahoma and played sports in high school. She ranked seventh in the high jump in track and field and was also a championship-level basketball player. She had looks as well as skill in sports and the pretty young blonde won the Miss Teen McAlester crown in Oklahoma at age fifteen.

Clonie is a divorced mother of two and lives in Dallas, Texas. Her older child, a daughter, lives with her first husband and she is raising her second child, a son, who is a product of her second marriage.

She learned poker while in her teens and became more skillful after her first divorce when she would drive to Shreveport, Louisiana to play in the casinos. Clonie began to win several hundred dollars each weekend which soon became a steady income and decided she could earn more money as a gambler then working at her travel agency business to play poker full time and finds this world much more to her liking.

She became known to the public after finishing tenth in the 2002 Costa Rica Classic. The following year, she beat five of the world's best women players - including Annie Duke and Jennifer Harman – at WPT's Ladies Night which was an event that was made for television.

## Player Profile: Erik Seidel

Some of Clonie's poker-related activities:

- Appeared on Good Morning America · Mentioned in the New York Times, Dallas Observer, Texas Monthly, Esquire Magazine · Guest appearances on Ultimate Poker Challenge in Las Vegas and European World Poker Championship in Dublin, Ireland · Writes a regular Question and Answer column for WSOP Bluff Magazine · Member of the Board of Directors of the United States Poker Association

Clonie Gowan is a member of the team of poker experts on FullTilt.com, Howard Lederer's website, which include the following notables:

- Chris Ferguson · Jennifer Harman · Erick Lindgren · Mike Matusow · Phil Ivey · John Juanda · Phil Gordon · Erik Seidel · Andy Bloch

She is now a partner in a poker school teaching the basics of tournament play to women and men. She states the aim of the school is to instruct her students "How to be successful in a competitive game where your own money is at stake." Additionally, she is writing a book "Good Girls Do Make the Final table", which is scheduled to be printed by Harcourt Brace and is due out some time in 2006.

Unlike most other well-known poker players who are open about their winnings, Clonie, "The New Face of Poker", is vague about her finances.

She also is involved in charities where she is a frequent host and does a great deal of volunteer work. At the Whisper Walk in Dallas to help victims of ovarian cancer, Clonie – whose mother is a survivor of this disease - was a very much appreciated guest speaker.

Clonie Gowan is considered a midlevel poker professional and has high public visibility. However, her name did not appear in Card Player magazine's rankings and she has thus far not finished at the final table of any important tournament.

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