

# HELIO STRIKES BACK

AFTER A YEAR OF DODGING TAX CHARGES, MIAMI'S FASTEST DRIVER TAKES THE INDY 500:

**BY FRANCISCO ALVARADO**

Watching Helio Castroneves sob joyfully as he sipped from his victory bottle of milk, Riptide couldn't help but feel all warm and fuzzy. After all, we like it when a Miami celeb can get over on The Man and continue making millions more dollars entertaining us. When Castroneves won his third Indianapolis 500 this past May 24, it was like he was sending a special F-you to the federal government for almost ruining his career.

To recap, Castroneves almost didn't make it to victory lane thanks to the IRS and Miami federal prosecutors, who had accused the native Brazilian and his sister/business manager of hiding more than \$5.5 million in income. The feds charged the siblings with six charges of tax evasion plus one count of conspiracy. They also indicted Castroneves's tax lawyer, Alan Miller of Michigan.

Thankfully, Castroneves still had enough money in the bank to hire high-powered criminal defense attorneys Roy Black and Howard Srebnick, who successfully convinced a Miami federal jury that the \$5.5 million was sent to a deferred income account in the Netherlands. When that account comes due, Castroneves will pay his U.S. taxes as he intended all along, Black informed jurors, who bought the defense. This past April 17, the jury cleared Castroneves, his sister, and Miller on the tax evasion charges. They deadlocked on the conspiracy charge, which the U.S. Attorney's Office in Miami quickly dropped.

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