50th Macao Motorcycle Grand Prix

First run in 1967, this year marks the 50th Edition of what has become one of the world's most celebrated motorcycle road races. Today, the international field made up of the best road and endurance riders on the planet do battle between the iron Armco barriers and unforgiving walls of the Guia street circuit at breathtaking speeds nudging 280kph.

The first name on the impressive roll of honour is **Hiroshi Hasegawa** of Japan who, as a 33-year-old Yamaha works driver, took the first of two consecutive victories in 1967.

The opening decade was dominated by Japanese riders, until 1977, **Mick Grant** became the first British rider to win in Macau. His 1977 victory came on a Kawasaki KR750, with a second win in 1984 aboard a Heron-Suzuki 500.

The 1981 running of the event marked the dawn of the reign of **Ron "Rocket" Haslam**, star of the 500cc World Championship during the 1980's and a charismatic and popular rider. The British rider won all six Grands Prix he entered in Macau between 1981 and 1987 (he did not enter in 1984), a record which remains unbeaten to this day.

In 1988, Texan star and the man who was to become 1993 500cc World Champion **Kevin Schwantz** was invited to Macau. The rider delivered a virtuoso performance from pole to flag riding a Suzuki RGR500, building an unassailable lead to win the Grand Prix by a comfortable margin from German Peter Rubatto.

The list of 27 riders who have won the race since 1967 is as fascinating as the Grand Prix itself. The history of the legendary Dunlop road racing family is intertwined with this great event too. The late Joey Dunlop, five-times World Formula One TT motorcycle Champion and 26-times Isle of Man TT winner, took two podium finishes in Macau; a third place behind Ron Haslam and Mick Grant in 1982, and as runner-up to Haslam the following year. Joey's brother, Robert Dunlop, father of William and Michael, both of whom have raced in Macau, clinched victory on the Guia Circuit in 1989.

In 1990, Scottish rider Steve Hislop, reigning 250cc British Champion, took the first of his three Macau victories. Hislop was an 11-time winner at the Isle of Man TT as well as British Superbike Champion in 1995 and 2002. The decade also saw wins from four-time World Superbike Champion Carl Fogarty (1992), and road racing legend Phillip McCallen (1996), however it was the arrival of **Michael Rutter** in 1994 that was to change the history of the Macau Motorcycle Grand Prix.

Rutter's father, Tony, was a successful rider in the 1970's, winning seven Isle of Man TT races and taking four Formula 2 World Championship titles. Rutter earned his first Macau victory in 1998, and in 2012 took his tally of wins to a record-breaking eight. While his mastery of the Guia Circuit is unrivaled, so intense is the competition for a coveted Macau title that his 15-year dominance of the race has been interrupted by some of the greatest names in road racing: David Jefferies (1999); John McGuinness (2001); Steve Plater (2006 and 2007); Stuart Easton (2008-2010 and 2014); and Ian Hutchinson (2013). Last year, it was the turn of 28-year-old rider Peter Hickman, taking victory on his second visit to Macau. However Rutter, the undisputed "Two Wheel King of Macau", was not far behind, crossing the line third to stand on the Macau Motorcycle Grand Prix podium for an incredible 16th time in his career to date.

Macau Grand Prix Facts

Guia Circuit's Length: 3.8 miles (6.2 km)
Time of the Race: 3rd weekend of November