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GRANDE PRÉMIO DE MACAU  
MACAU GRAND PRIX

GAZETTE

# TAKING THE TRIPLE: JOHN MACDONALD

**F**ifty years ago, John MacDonald set a Macau Grand Prix record which still stands to this day. Born in England in 1936, MacDonald did not come from a motorsport background. Despite this, he was fascinated by the sport throughout his childhood. So, in 1957, when friends suggested he ride his motorcycle at a race meeting at Silverstone Circuit, he agreed – and won.

MacDonald continued to compete successfully on his motorcycle at smaller race meetings across England. Although keen to race cars, at the time he was unable to afford the cost of one so was content to remain on two wheels. For now.

It wasn't until he was called up for the then-mandatory national military service that MacDonald got the chance to race a car for the first time. His four-wheel debut came in the 1962 Central African Rally, followed by the Scottish International Rally a year later where he drove an army Land Rover.

Later that same year, MacDonald arrived in Hong Kong to join the local police force and, in 1964, took part in the Macau Grand Prix for the first time. This was his very first experience of racing on a circuit in a car, and he finished sixth in the Grand Prix which was won that year by fellow Hong Kong policeman, Albert Poon. The first of what was to eventually become four Macau Grand Prix wins came on his second attempt, in 1965.

The Macau Motorcycle Grand Prix joined the race programme in 1967, and MacDonald entered on a Yamaha. Unfortunately, he was forced to retire with a seized engine on just the second lap of the marathon 183km race. The third edition of the Macau Motorcycle Grand Prix, in 1969, was held over 30 laps and this time he stood atop the podium. The victory made MacDonald the first and only man ever to win both the two- and four-wheel Grands Prix at Macao.



JOHN MACDONALD (RIGHT) WITH FELLOW MACAU MOTORCYCLE GRAND PRIX WINNER AND ONE-TIME RIVAL HIROSHI HASEGAWA



THE FIRST-EVER MACAU MOTORCYCLE GRAND PRIX IN 1967

MacDonald's next Macau Grand Prix win came in 1972, the same year he took the victory in the inaugural Macau Guia Race, setting another record of two headline race titles at a single event. The seemingly unstoppable Englishman followed up his achievement with a second consecutive Macau Grand Prix victory in 1973 in a Brabham BT40.

Having firmly stamped his mark on the event, MacDonald's Macau Grand Prix days were drawing to an end. He took his fourth and final Macau Grand Prix win in 1975, driving a Ralt RT1. The following year was to be his last as the Grand Prix was becoming increasingly professional and competitive. But MacDonald's record of four victories in the headline race

remains intact to this day, and is now unlikely ever to be bettered.

MacDonald's other Mac ao record has yet to be broken too. He remains the only competitor to have won the Macau Grand Prix, Macau Motorcycle Grand Prix and the Macau Guia Race. ❏



JOHN MACDONALD AT THE MACAU GRAND PRIX IN 1973, IN HIS BRABHAM BT40

