



**Mario Gabriele Andretti** is often referred to as the greatest racecar driver of all time, having proven himself a winner at all levels of competition. Mario Andretti's skilled and versatile driving has produced some of racing history's most legendary accomplishments. During his career, he has won four Champcar titles, the 1978 Formula One World Championship, and the 1979 IROC championship. Mario Andretti is the only person ever to win the Indy 500, the Daytona 500, and the Formula One World Championship. In 2000, the Associated Press and RACER magazine named him "Driver of the Century." The same year, he was inducted into the International Motorsports Hall of Fame.

Mario Andretti and his twin brother, Aldo, were born in 1940 in Montona in Italian Istria, (today Motovun in Croatia.) After World War II Istria passed to Yugoslavia and his family spent seven years in a displaced persons camp. They waited several years for U.S. visas, finally sailing to America in June 1955. Settling in Pennsylvania, the family of five had \$125 among them and did not speak English. Mario and Aldo were 15 years old.

The twins worked in the uncle's garage after school and in 1959 began racing a 1948 Hudson Hornet Sportsman Stock Car. They took turns behind the wheel and in their first four races, each won twice. In the last race of the season, Aldo crashed, fracturing his skull. However, he returned to the sport a year later and raced another 10 years. He retired in 1969 after another major accident caused him substantial injuries. Meanwhile, Mario's career flourished as he won 20 races in the modified stock class in his first two seasons. He went on to win the first of his four Champcar national championships. Mario Andretti repeated as national champion in ...

## Mario Andretti

### Speech Topics

- Legends
- Leadership
- Inspiration
- Attitude

