



## NERINGA MASILIONIENE

**Name:** Neringa Masilioniene (née Aidietyte)

**Born:** 05.06.1983

**Date Joined:** Early 2011

**Personal Bests:** 20 km race walking - 1:29.01

**10 km race walking-** 44:09

**50 km race walking-** 4:28:53

**half marathon run -** 1:18:33

**First Club Race:** honestly, can't remember

**Favourite Race:** they were all favourite where I achieved PB

**Notable Performances:** World Race walking Cup in Taicang, China, where I first broke national 20 km race walking record

**Typical Weeks Training:** Since retiring from professional athlete's career and having kids I don't have any scheduled training haha

**Favourite Sessions:** After having kids every chance I get to go training is my favourite session:)

**Who is the most Famous Athlete you've seen:** Usain Bolt, Fernando Torres, Ronaldo (Brazilian), Seb Coe

**How would you improve the sport:** Let people who actually care about athletes to govern the sport

**What other sports do you follow:** none, sorry, no time , I have 2 little kids lol

**Best Country Visited:** Switzerland

**Favourite Food & Drink:** Lasagna and Margarita

**Favourite TV Shows:** Friends, Breaking Bad, Sopranos

**Last Film Seen:** Abducted in Plain Sight

**Last Book Read:** Phil Knight "Shoe Dog"

**Favourite Band Singer:** Pink, Justin Timberlake



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**Last Theatre Attended:** can't remember now, been ages ago!

**Any Pets:** French Bulldog named Indrute

**What are your aims for next season:** hopefully to train more regularly

**Tell us a Joke:** I don't recommend catnapping. it only lasts a little while. then the owner wants their cat back







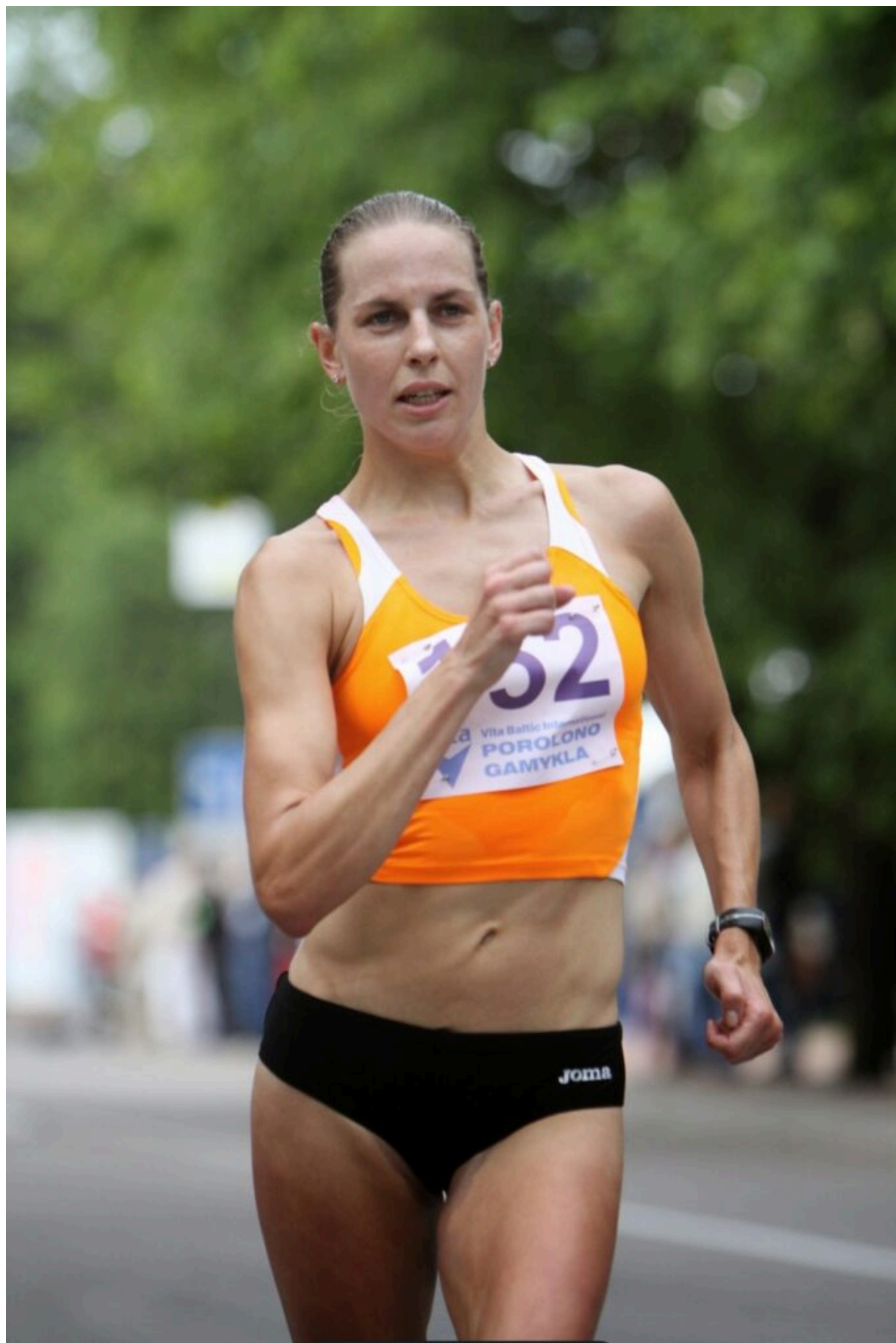


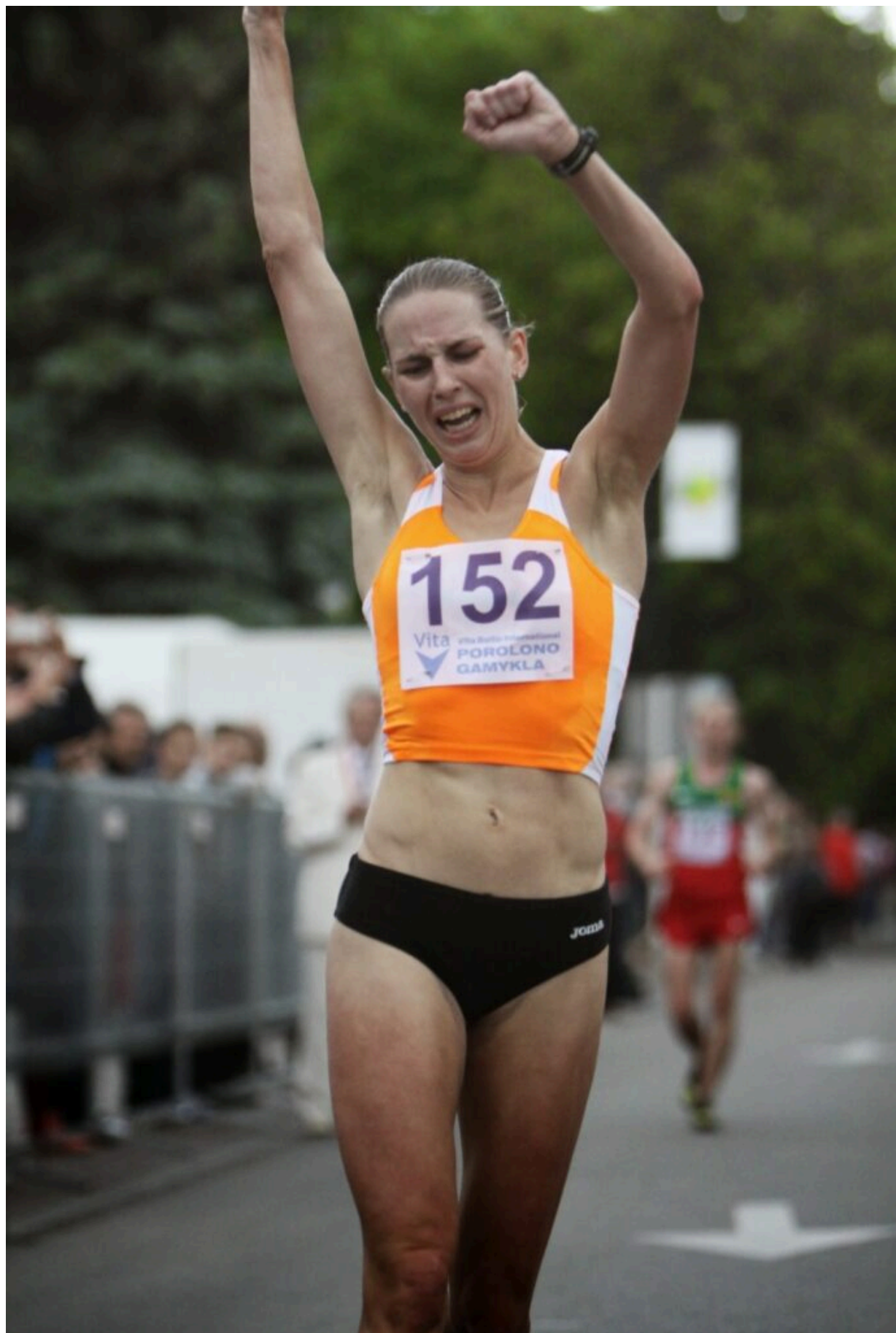
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## NERINGA ANSWERS YOUR QUESTIONS

**How did you get involved with Race Walking Initially and did you start off as a runner?**

I got involved with race walking at quite late age -19 years old. And yes, I've started off as





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runner at age 11, competing at 800 m, 1000 m, 1500 m, 3000 m but at the end I was quite an average runner and one coach suggested to switch to race walking.

In your racing heyday what training were you doing?

in my heyday I was speed sessions on Tuesdays and Fridays, long walk 20-30 km on Wednesdays and Saturdays, on Thursdays used to be cross training- then I used to go for a 11-16 km run.

Did you do weights/core training as well?

I don't do any weight lifting. does lifting my kids (sometimes both at the same time!) counts? But I do occasionally core exercises, before having kids I used to do core more regularly.

### **Any special Nutrition?**

No special Nutrition, far from that! I love chocolate and cakes, I'm no example for any sport diet! But I make sure I don't overeat.

Did you take any supplements eg Cod Liver Oil or Multi-Vitamins etc?

I take supplements for sure! I've been breastfeeding since my son (I'm still breastfeeding my daughter) was born so supplements are a must! I take Multi-Vitamins, iron, Magnesium, Omega-3, vit. C and digestive enzymes.

What race did you achieve your half-marathon PB AND Have you ever run a marathon?

I achieved my Half marathon PB in September 2015 in my hometown Vilnius. Came second in that race. Never ran a marathon but it's on my bucket list for sure!



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What made you initially Join Ilford AC ?

I was introduced by one veteran race walker from Portugal Francisco Reis and he was Ilford AC member and he encouraged me to join this club so I could start racing in UK.

What are your International Honours?

My international honours are not super impressive positions wise. I am double Olympian but finished far from the podium. I finished 7th in European championship for U-23 in 20 km walk, 5th in World Student Games in 20 km, I was part of women's race walking team whom we finished 4th in World Race walking Cup back in 2008.

**You have come back this season and ran well in your two recent races - winning both with some ease. What training have you been doing in the background to produce such solid runs and have you just come back to running recently or have you maintained training all along?**

When I finished my professional race walking career in the end of 2016 I kept sort of fit by occasional running and race walking session. In my first pregnancy I was still going for runs until 5 months into pregnancy. In my second pregnancy I was feeling quite sick in first trimester so going for runs was the last thing I wanted to do! and then later in the pregnancy I just didn't bother anymore. But 1 month after my second baby was born I went for running/race walking session and oh my goodness, my body felt so stiff! But I didn't do any regular training, and I still don't because raising 2 toddlers is taking a toll sometimes! But these 2 wins recently gave me an incentive to start running more regularly, even if I don't feel like running!

How did it feel the first time you competitively represented your Country?

How did it feel to represent my country for the first time internationally? Honestly, I don't remember feeling anything special maybe because Lithuania is small, and we don't have a gruesome competition between each other to get selected for international events



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What do you find easier and what do you prefer – race walking or running?

I prefer running today – it's faster so I can go back quicker to my duties as a mom. I like to say that running is my "first love" but race walking is my "true love"

Who was your biggest rival in competitions?

My biggest rival in the competitions used to be my training partner and initially my best friend Brigita Virbalyte, she still competes in Race Walking at elite level. It was a big shock for her when I retired from race walking.

What are your next competitive ambitions?

My next competitive ambitions are to win as many races for my club as much as possible!

### **What made you move to England and have you always lived in this part of London?**

I first moved to London back in 2009 when after a disastrous season in race walking I decided to quit being an athlete and moved to London to be "normal" : go to work, go for drinks after work and so on! Started training after 5 months again and picked where I left off and decided to be professional race walker again after London Olympics. Moved back home to Lithuania in the beginning of 2014, had fantastic season of 2014, not bad 2015 and awful 2016 and came back to live in UK because my now husband lived here already (we know each other since I was 15 but became an item only in 2016).

I always lived in East London (shared flats in Mile End and Bethnal Green). Lived in Hainault for couple of years and now we live in Collier Row.

### **How does daily life differ here from your birth country and is the weather different?**

Life here in UK differs for me because I don't have any relatives (husband is not a relative!)





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so it's just my own little family. But weather wise Lithuania is quite similar when it comes to rain but it's not as windy as UK! And we have snow regularly in winters and we get by just fine when it snows!

**Did you get commemorative vests for representing your country in the Olympics, and if so, have you kept them?**

I used to get commemorative vests and kits every season and kept most of them!

**Do you cook, and if so, what is your signature dish? Have you tried 'Pie, Mash and Liquor'?**

I would say I don't cook - my husband does the honours even though my mom and aunt are cooks! But I cook for my kids. My signature dish is pasta with minced meat in tomato sauce or with smoked salmon, mushrooms and cream. Something easy!

Unfortunately I never tried "Pie, Mash and Liquor". Sounds naughty!

**What 6 people, alive or dead, would you like to share a meal with?**

I would definitely like to share meal with my dad who unfortunately passed away 23 years ago. I'm sure he would be proud of my athletic achievements.

Other 5 would be Ricky Gervais, Russel Howard, Graham Norton and Alan Carr - I'd love to hear their jokes about race walking! And I love to laugh hard!

Novak Djokovic would make the final guest - I admire his achievements in tennis and his philanthropic work. He comes across like very composed, humble, compassionate, and friendly man!

**The rules of race walking seem complicated to me, have you ever been disqualified in a race and if so are you pulled out when the offence is committed or are you told**



**when the race is over?**

Rules of race walking are a bit more complicated than it used to be few years ago! But it's not that complicated, I would say more subjective! And yes, I had been disqualified twice in my race-walking competitions, and it happened both times in World Championships (2011 and 2015, both after 14 km)

**Do you remain friends with any of your Olympic teammates?**

I still remain friends with my Olympic teammates though we are not as close or see each other since I live in another country and have family now.

**When did you first realise you were good at sport and how did you feel the first time you were asked to represent your country?**

I don't remember thinking that I'm good at sports but my mom was the one to take me to gymnastics practises and age 6, I was training for a year. Then I dabbled in dances, basketball but PT teacher saw my potential at running long distances and directed me to try athletics. I knew I was good in PT classes so maybe then?

**When you appeared at the London Olympics did you have to stay in the athlete's accommodation and if so, what were the facilities like?**

I stayed in the Olympic Village couple of nights but stayed mainly in my shared flat in Bethnal Green. Because I already lived in London I asked to be part of athlete's parade in the Opening ceremony. The experience was surreal! And Olympic Village rocks! especially the canteen! All the food of the world and even McDonald's! and everything is for FREE!!!



**Who requires the most attention in your house - The children, the Dog....or your husband?**

Most attention in my household requires my daughter! She's so attached to me! I have to sneak away for my runs! Otherwise, she cries so bad! My dog requires least attention- she's the best dog I've ever owned! Except for snoring and farting- she's the worst in that field

**Will your children grow up bilingual and did you learn English as a child or have you learned it since living here?**

My children for sure will grow up bilingual, no exceptions! I want them to be able to communicate with their grandma and cousins and other family members when we go to Lithuania for visits. I'm not ruling out going back to Lithuania permanently so yes, they have to speak Lithuanian.

I learned English in school and by watching movies on TV (in Lithuania they are dubbed). But for sure improved my fluent English while living in UK.

**On the occasions that you can train do you prefer Cross Country or road training?**

I'd say I prefer road running because of the smoother execution but I run mainly cross country because of wider choice for running courses. My favourite is running to Raphael's Park and to Hainault Forest - the hills are the challenge I like to take!





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