

IPN Race Walker

aims for World Athletics Championship Tokyo 2025



After placing 15th in the “Dudinska 50” Gold-Level Race Walking Event (in the 20-kilometer category)—an elite international competition held in Slovenia

Dana Paola Aceves González, race walker from the Instituto Politécnico Nacional (IPN), made significant progress toward earning a spot on the national team that will compete in the 2025 World Athletics Championships, set to take place in Tokyo, Japan. Should she reach her goal, she would become the first IPN athlete to represent the institution at that level.

The Dudinska 50 is a key preparation event for Mexican race walkers striving to improve their qualifying times for the World Championships, scheduled for September 13–21, 2025, where the world’s best athletes will vie for a place on the podium.

A second-semester student in Business Administration and Development at the Escuela Superior de Comercio y Administración (ESCA), Santo Tomás campus, and a three-time National Olympics champion (2022, 2023, 2024) in events organized by Conade, Aceves González shared her experiences and aspirations with Gaceta Politécnica, expressing her dream of bringing joy to the Mexican people through one of the country’s most medal-winning sports.

Can you tell us about your journey at the IPN?

It’s something of a family tradition—some of my relatives studied at IPN, including an uncle who pursued a degree in Accounting. Knowing the institution’s prestige inspired me and motivated me to apply.

How has it been balancing athletics with IPN’s demanding academic workload?

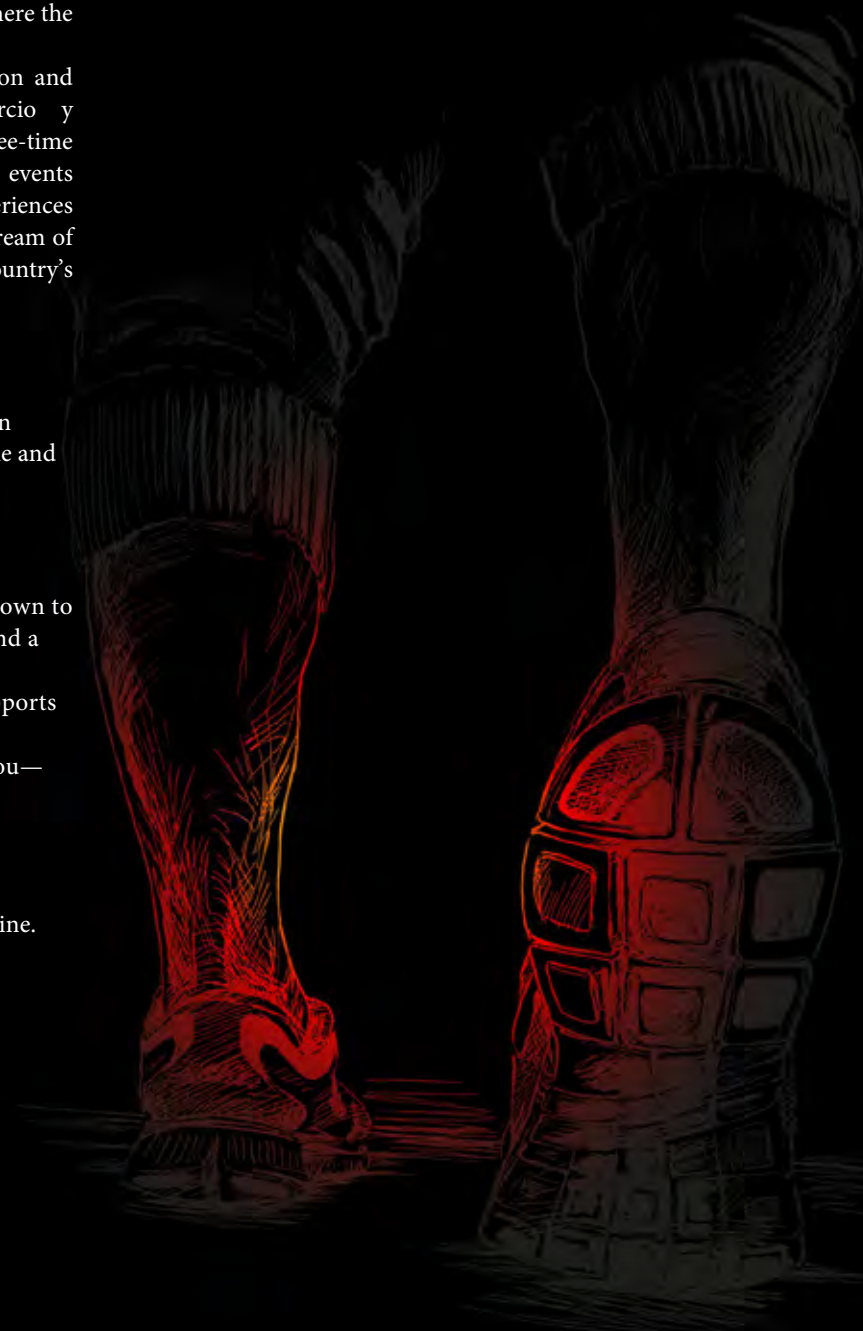
It’s definitely not easy to balance both. It really comes down to one’s own will and determination—both as an athlete and a student—to succeed in academics while also growing in sports. For me, IPN represents an environment that supports personal development. Time management is key. When traveling for competitions, you bring everything with you—laptop, notebooks—and basically turn your room into a classroom.

What mindset does a high-performance race walker need?

You need a great deal of patience, consistency, and discipline. Talent plays a role too, but hard work is essential.



It’s up to each person, as both an athlete and a student, to make the decision to stand out



I see it as a life opportunity that helps shape who I am.

I've been race walking since I was 12. It was the first sport I truly fell in love with, and I'm still passionate about it. Sports run in my family, but in a different way—my grandfather was a wrestler, so race walking was quite a contrast. My start in race walking and in my current team was kind of a coincidence, but I was drawn in by the competition and the individual challenge it represents. Ultimately, your biggest rival is yourself—not just in competition, but in training too.

How do you feel about the competitions you've won so far?

They've been a personal rebirth in sports. At times when it felt like there was nothing left for me in this path, life reminded me otherwise.

The Cantones A Coruña 2022 was my first international event, competing in the open 20km category. Competing against Olympic and world championship athletes in a new environment left a big impression.

It's thrilling to be part of these circuits. Before each event, they introduce the top athletes, and knowing their backgrounds is inspiring. But in that moment, you have to believe you belong on that stage too—that the opportunity is real for all of us.

How did you achieve your milestone at the "Dudinska 50"?

The excitement started the moment I arrived—I even got to watch part of the 35km event. As you start warming up, nerves hit you, and you're unsure if you're ready.

The race took place in cold weather, quite unlike Mexico City. But when the start gun goes off, adrenaline kicks in.





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In academics as in sports you have to take one step at a time. You always have to be constant and never give up on those dreams you want to fulfill

You face it with a preparation that is a reflection of all your training. When you hear the starting gun, the heart rate changes immediately, and adrenaline is present to know what the future holds for you in those 20 laps.

Then you feel a sense of security when you see that you're moving forward and getting into the leading group, because that's what the walk is all about. In the 20 kilometers, the first five laps it seems that everyone goes together, then smaller groups start to form. I think that's the part that motivates me, the fact of knowing that you never get out of the groups that are positioning themselves well.

Seeing your watch, the kilometer split times, in short..., there are many things and I think the emotions are combined. At the end of the race you have the security of knowing that it is a challenge that was met in a good way. It takes an excellent physical and mental preparation, which is often what makes athletes stand out.

As a high-performance athlete, you represent not just IPN, but also women in sports. What does that mean to you?

It's a huge responsibility. In every competition, you carry the identity of a community—the IPN and the girls looking up to you. In my team, there are young boys and girls who see me as a role model, and that's a powerful reason to do things right—not just for myself, but for them.

Mexico has a rich history of race walkers who've triumphed in the Olympics and World Championships. Do you dream of joining the national team and making the podium?

Absolutely. More than a dream, it's something I work toward every day. Race walking has earned Mexico many Olympic medals. That legacy motivates me—especially knowing a woman has won an Olympic medal in this discipline. It makes me think: Why not me? I believe I'm part of a strong generation of women chasing their dreams. Each of us is writing her own story, and in competition, we all have the same opportunity.

Seeing María Guadalupe González Romero, who won an Olympic medal in 2016, training at the Centro Ceremonial Otomí is incredible. Watching her train with so much dedication—even after everything she's achieved—inspires me deeply.

What message would you share with young athletes who see you as a role model and want to succeed in both athletics and academics at the IPN?

IPN represents opportunity. I've always said that when life puts the right people in your path, you have to be grateful. Behind every female athlete, there's a support network—IPN leadership, coaches, family. That's the foundation every student and athlete needs: their own support system to help make their dreams a reality. ♡