

Web Posted: 03/15/2009 12:00 CDT

Local hits bull's-eye for Team USA and community

By [Bryan Chu](#) - Express-News

Staten Holmes is a celebrity within San Antonio's archery community.

Holmes was part of the U.S. Archery Recurve team that won a gold medal last Sunday at the 2009 World Archery Indoor Championship in Rzeszów, Poland. He and teammates Brady Ellison and Vic Wunderle defeated Italy to help the United States take top honors in the competition for the first time in eight years.

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- [Local archer Staten Holmes nails gold and aims for 2012](#)

"It's still a little bit surreal," said Holmes, 34, whose first name is pronounced STAY-ten. "It's pretty overwhelming. You have a lot of emotions running through you."

Balloons, a cake and a round of applause greeted Holmes at the Bow Shop on the Northwest side on Thursday. His trophy and gold medal were the hot topic.

"It's very cool," said fellow archer Mike Vaughan, 57. "We're jealous. It makes us all want to do something like that."

Added Fred Ramirez, 49, who has owned the Bow Shop for 17 years: "When he comes in, he brightens up the archery shop."

For Holmes, clutching the gold medal and trophy were vindication after missing a spot on the 2008 Olympic team. He finished seventh in the final round of qualifiers — only the top three went to Beijing.

"This helps the training effort when you're out there sweating and getting the arrows in," Holmes said of winning gold. "You remember the championships like these. It definitely makes it easier (to train)."

This was the third time Holmes had competed in the biennial World Indoor Championships. In 2007, Team USA captured bronze, but this time he helped bring home gold, the first time the U.S. had done so since 2001.

"It was a long drought, and it's a special victory, being able to bring this trophy back to the states," Holmes said.

The Houston native, who now calls San Antonio home, already has left his imprint on the Lone Star State's archery scene.

He was the first big name on the Texas A&M club archery team. In 1994, his freshman year, Holmes led the Aggies to the first of 11 national championships. Later, he would recruit Wunderle, who became a three-time Olympian.

"It was the house that Staten built," joked Holmes, who started shooting competitively at age 13 and became immersed in the sport because of his father, Robert, who was an avid outdoorsman and hunter.

Archery even helped Holmes meet his future wife, Jennifer Comedy-Holmes, who also was on the Texas A&M club team.

By the time Holmes graduated from A&M, he was a four-time All-American and had won two national championships. He went on to attend pharmacy school and lost interest in the sport.

"I shot so hard and long," Holmes said. "I felt like I retired after A&M. I was tired and done."

But two years later, Holmes' wife wanted to shoot for fun and brought him with her.

"When I picked up the bow again, I was shooting better than before I quit," Holmes said.


He believes the last seven years have been the best of his archery career.

Holmes works as a full-time Walgreens pharmacist but still manages to pull a few strings. After winning a gold medal and coming close to making the Olympic team, Holmes has the 2012 Olympics as his target.

“London isn't out of question,” Holmes said. “... I'll put my best foot forward.”

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