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Top Archery Athens Prospects - Women

Jennifer Nichols – Number one ranked Jennifer Nichols is undoubtedly the top archery prospect to make the 2004 U.S. Olympic Team. Last Year, 20-year-old Nichols was the World Archery Festival Champion, World Indoor Championship Silver Medalist, was a member of the World Target Championship Team, U.S. Open Champion, Pan American Games Individual Gold and Team Gold Medalist, set two Pan American records and was named USA Archery Female Athlete of the Year. She has started off 2004 with great success, winning the National Indoor Championships and Arizona Cup International. Nichols was born in Kansas City, Mo., but moved to Cheyenne, Wyo. with her family at the age of six. She started shooting archery when she was eleven years old after her father bought her a compound bow from Wal-Mart for Christmas. He also bought bows for her sister who was eight and her brother who was four. Soon after that, her parents acquired bows and they found archery to be very enjoyable family sport and would shoot in their backyard for fun. Nichols loved competition from the very start, as did her brother and sister. They continued to get more and more involved in archery to the point now where her family travels all over the U.S. to attend archery competitions together. When she was fifteen, a coach suggested to Jennifer the possibility of making the Olympic Team someday. She took this as a great compliment, but just stuck it in the back of her mind. Little did she know, that idea grew into a dream that she has spent past five years pursuing. Nichols was home schooled by her parents through high school, graduating in 2002. She has four younger brothers and sisters who are home schooled and also shoot archery. Her father owns his own business where he builds decorative iron, electronic, security gates for wealthy estates and her mother is a home schoolteacher and an artist. Her grandmother owned a dance studio in Kansas City where Nichols started tap dancing at age two. She has been involved in ballet, pointe, and modern, jazz, lyrical jazz and Irish Step ever since and currently teaches dance classes as well as takes classes herself. When Nichols is not shooting archery or dancing, she also enjoys reading, camping, hiking, fishing, rifle shooting, and fly-tying.

Karen Scavotto – Scavotto (Enfield, Conn.) was only 17-years-old when she competed at her first Olympic Games in 2000. Now at the age of 21, Scavotto is looking to make her second consecutive Olympic Team. Currently ranked second in the U.S., Scavotto is a resident athlete at the Olympic Training Center in Chula Vista, Calif. Scavotto, the 2003 Women's National Champion, started shooting archery at the age of eight. She won the individual gold and team bronze at the Sydney Golden Arrow in 1999, which was her first international competition as a senior and finished second at the Olympic Trials in 2000. Scavotto attended the same grade school and high school as 1980 Olympic ice hockey gold medalist, Craig Janney.

Kathie Loesch – Number three-ranked Kathie Loesch (Sugarland, Texas) was a member of the 2003 World Target Championship Team and also a member of the Athens Test Event Team. Thirty-three-year-old Loesch started shooting archery at the age of 11 and hopes to make her first Olympic Team this year. A 1996 graduate of Houston Baptist University, Loesch is currently a teacher in Texas. She has three children.

Stephanie Miller – Eighteen-year-old Stephanie Miller (Naperville, Ill.) is a freshman English Major at Columbia University in New York, N.Y. Ranked fourth in the country, Miller is coming off a very successful 2003 in which she finished 1st at the National Indoor Championships, second at the National Target Championships, was a member of the World Championship and Turkey Grand Prix Teams and won an individual bronze and team gold medal at the Pan American Games. Miller started shooting archery at the age of seven and comes from a family of archers. Her brother Jonathan is a top junior and her parents Mark and Kathy also compete in archery. Her father Mark is the President of USA Archery and also serves on the Constitution and Rules Committee for the Archery International Federation, Federation Internationale de Tir a l'Arc (FITA) and is the Vice President of COPANARCO, the Continental Archery Association for North and South America. Her goal is to make the 2004, 2008 and 2012 Olympic Teams.

Margot Stuchin – Sixteen-year-old Stuchin (New York, N.Y.) first tried archery at the age of seven at a summer camp in Maine. Although she really enjoyed the sport, she didn't take it up at that time because living in Manhattan, there was nowhere to shoot (the closest archery range is 45 minutes away from her family's apartment). The idea of continuing to pursue archery was put off until two years later when she finally joined a Junior Olympic Archery Development (JOAD) club. She received her first bow for her eleventh birthday, but because there were very limited places for her to shoot, much of her practicing was and still is done in the bedroom of her family's apartment in Manhattan. She shoots at a target nine or 10 feet away and says there are holes in the wall to prove it. Besides archery, Stuchin enjoys drawing, painting, writing and she used to play piano but quit lessons a few years ago to make more time for archery. Stuchin recently moved to San Diego, Calif. with her parents to train full-time at the Olympic Training Center in Chula Vista for the Olympic Trials in June.

Erika "Aya" LaBrie – LaBrie (Aurora, Colo) started shooting archery at the age of 27 while living in Japan in an effort to find an art she could do with a bad back after an accident prohibited her from continuing her first love of martial arts. At age 32 and having only started her archery career four years ago, Erika "Aya" LaBrie recently switched from a compound bow to a recurve bow and had a tremendous year competitively in 2003. She was part of the Women's Compound Team that took home a gold medal and new world record at the World Target Championships in New York City. At the NAA Nationals, she shot both recurve and compound taking 10th and third place respectively.

A writer and an artist, LaBrie is also skilled in martial arts, enjoys mountain biking, fishing, hiking, camping, graphic arts, scrap booking, poetry and singing.

She is currently a resident athlete at the Olympic Training Center in Chula Vista, Calif.