

## FEATURES

# Universality invitation completes Dorji's long-awaited Olympic dream

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**ATHLETE SPOTLIGHT** is presented by [WIAWIS](#).

It's been a long wait for [Lam Dorji](#) to realise his Olympic dreams.

But the archer from Bhutan has no complains. He, rather, says it's worth the wait – he feels he has been in his best form recently. He's just over the moon.

"I was a bit numb," said Dorji on the Olympic call-up. "It was definitely a dream come true moment for me, there was mixed emotions."

"Simply competing in the Olympics feels like winning a medal. This is a special moment," added the 29-year-old from Samdrup Jongkhar, a town in south-east of Bhutan.

Bhutan archers have featured in every Olympics since [Los Angeles 1984](#), with Karma becoming the first archer to qualify through quota for [Tokyo 2020](#).

Dorji will be the lone archer carrying the hopes of his tiny Himalayan nation at this Games, joining marathoner Kinzang Lhamo and swimmer Sangay Tenzin in one of the smallest contingents in Paris.

His road to the Olympics was laced by 644 points – the minimum standard for the 72-arrow 70-metre round being 640 – in the [final world qualifier in Antalya](#) that helped him get one of the universality invitations.

Before that he achieved his personal best of 664 at the [Asian Archery Championship in Bangkok](#) last November, something he is aiming for in Paris.

The pressure of competing at the Olympics is immense so does the challenges in Les Invalides with 63 others, including the world's very best, awaiting to fight for Olympic glory.



And Dorji is aware of that.

“I don’t want to keep my expectations very high,” said the archer from Bhutan, humble enough to add that he must ‘work harder and be more determined’ to achieve better results.

“I will try to enjoy the competition at the biggest stage. I want to give my best shot and will aim to get my personal best.”

With archery being the most popular and national sport of the tiny Himalayan kingdom, every age group happen to play it at one point of their life.

Likewise, Dorji’s journey in the sport began in 2012 during a talent hunt coaching camp held across the nation by the [Bhutan archery federation](#) and including a one-week training programme.

He was selected as one of the top 100 archers out of 1500 participants, was chosen for the national squad after being called up for a two-week coaching session over the break.

He went on to train at the [Bhutan archery federation](#) in Thimpu under coach [Tashi Tshering](#) the following year.

Since then, archery became his way of life.

Archery taught him the importance of 'patience and discipline' while his parents' dedication, hard work, and unwavering support shaped his values and aspirations.

"Growing up, they were my inspiration. They taught me the importance of perseverance."

"Watching them navigate challenges with resilience and grace showed me the power of determination and empathy," he shared with pride.



Dorji made his international debut in 2014 but it was only after the arrival of Korean coach [Park 'Sally' Youngsook](#) five years later that his game progressed.

Coach Sally's training methods emphasised on 'shooting posture and technique' have helped the national archer achieve amazing results in international competitions.

"Before she arrived, my bow hand was bad. My posture wasn't great either."

"She has basically polished my shooting technique, and we have reached this far," said Dorji, adding that his bonding with Youngsook has developed over the years.

The 29-year-old's preparation include training in different time zones.

"I practiced during the afternoon or evening and trained on a regular basis during other times," he explained.

The duo is now focused to make an impactful debut at the Games and held a one-week training at the Arc de Club Blagnac in southwest France before heading to Paris.

The main focus being was on rhythm shooting.

“I will do everything in my power to the best of my ability in the hopes of improving both my individual and qualification round performance,” he added looking forward to a memorable Olympic debut.

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