Jenny Thompson

Jenny Thompson is a famous American swimmer. She has won twelve Olympic medals for swimming. In a book about her life, *Fast Lane to Victory*, Jenny is quoted as saying, “I’ve always competed because I just love swimming.”

Jenny was born in Massachusetts in 1973. She and her three big brothers were raised by their mother. Jenny started swimming underwater when she was only seven months old. People could not believe it when they saw a baby moving her arms and kicking her feet in a pool. Of course, no one would dream of letting any child so little swim alone. Jenny’s mother and brothers stayed right by her.

Jenny started racing for swim teams in Massachusetts when she was seven. At age 12, she switched to a swim club in Dover, New Hampshire. For a while, Jenny and her mom were driving 45 minutes each way to practice at the Guppey Pool in Dover. Jenny was soon setting records for her new team. Finally, the family moved to Dover to make getting to practice easier. After Jenny grew up, the Guppey Pool was renamed in her honor. It is now called the Jenny Thompson Pool.

At fourteen, Jenny started winning races against swimmers from around the world. Before her first Olympics in 1992, Jenny was rated the top swimmer in the world in two events. Many people were hoping she might win five gold medals. Those hopes faded when she swam too slowly to win a spot in some of the final races. Still, Jenny won a silver medal and two gold medals that year. Afterwards, Jenny continued to win college meets and world meets. She went to the Olympics three more times and won nine more medals. When Jenny retired from swimming, she became a doctor.