

Jensen Lynnes participated in Missouri Valley Championships Friday, Saturday, and Sunday in Lawrence. The Wellington swimmer had a busy weekend as it was, but she actually qualified in more events than she was allowed to swim. Championships is the most prestigious meet hosted by Missouri Valley. While Missouri Valley is divided into two Districts meets (East and West), the Championships meet in Lawrence contained all the best swimmers in the Missouri Valley LSC, which encompasses all of Kansas, about half of Missouri, a section of the Oklahoma panhandle, and a nick of Texas.

Lynnes proved herself perfectly capable of handling the stiff competition. With a 3.8 second cut in the 100 Back, she placed 13th out of 49 and captured Aurora Bonham's team record. The 50 Free is always a competitive event, and this year was no exception. Out of 50 swimmers, Lynnes took 19th, shaving a fraction of a second and so beating her own team record. On her last swim of a long weekend, Lynnes improved her own team record with a 43.43 in the 50 Back, taking 22nd out of 45. By cutting over a second in the 100 Free, Lynnes beat Savanna Bonham's team record (fun fact: it was exactly six years old) and placed 28th out of 53. Lynnes was unable to shave more time from the two second cut last weekend that qualified her 50 Breast for Championships, but she did swim her time, adding just .22 seconds and placing 17th out of 31. Lynnes demonstrated great mental and physical toughness in the 100 Breast and 50 Fly. After only ten minutes of recovery from her 50 Free, Lynnes had to hop back up on the blocks for the long breaststroke. Despite the aching muscles, she placed 24th. The fly is, by most accounts, the hardest stroke of all, and it is certainly no easier when it is the third event of the day! Still, Lynnes persevered, placing 35th.

While year-round swimmers can represent their hometown swim team in summer leagues, they generally required to compete for their year-round club at qualification meets (depending on which team they are registered with in USA Swimming). Competing for the Wichita Aquashocks allowed Lynnes to team up with summer league rivals/year-round teammates Chloe Thome (of Twin Rivers), Sayler Roberts (of Haysville), and Nina Nelson (of Valley Center). The GPSL-spanning dream team gave Columbia Swim Club exhilaratingly tight races in both the medley and free relays. While they were unable to pull it out at the end, the Aquashock team earned two second place medals to mark their successful meet.

Great job, Jensen!