

Raynie Days Ahead?

ATHLETICS APPARENTLY CONDUCTING BACKDOOR SEARCH FOR TENNIS COACH

USM head women's tennis coach Raynie Thisis was pleased with her second recruiting class at USM. In a 1-Dec-2011 [press release](#), Thisis informed Golden Eagle fans that she was "very excited" about signing tennis stars from Texas and Oregon to national letters of intent that make them Golden Eagles in 2012-13 academic year. At that point, Thisis was looking forward to beginning her third season at USM, having produced records of 13-10 (in 2010) and 8-14 (in 2011).



Raynie Thisis

That was then, this is now, and the Martha Saunders hire (in 2009) has begun the 2012 season 0-1 after a shutout (0 to 7) to the Auburn Lady Tigers over the weekend of 28-29 Jan-2012. Though a respectable loss, it pushed Thisis' overall record at USM to 21-25 (0.457), leaving her in a greater need for wins than at any other time in her brief USM career.

The screenshot shows the 'Search Results' page on the University of Southern Mississippi's HR system. The page lists various job openings with columns for Job Title, Job Open Date, Job Close Date, Position Type, Department, and Campus. An orange arrow points to the entry for 'Head Coach, Women's Tennis'.

Job Title	Job Open Date	Job Close Date	Position Type	Department	Campus
Administrative Assistant-CLL	02-02-2012	02-10-2012	Staff	CLL	Hattiesburg
Communication Specialist/Internal Posting	02-02-2012	02-15-2012	Staff	Admissions	Hattiesburg
Food Services Chef/Manager, Gulf Coast Research Laboratory	02-01-2012	Open Until Filled	Staff	GCCL Dining Hall	GCCL
Administrative Assistant to the Vice President/CEO and Associate VP, Gulf Coast	01-31-2012	02-13-2012	Staff	CC - Vice President	Gulf Park
Vice President of Finance and Administration	01-27-2012	Open Until Filled	Staff	Office of the President	Hattiesburg
Associate Director of Athletics, Major Gifts Fundraiser	01-26-2012	02-09-2012	Staff	Intercollegiate Athletics	Hattiesburg
Head Coach, Women's Tennis	01-26-2012	02-09-2012	Staff	Intercollegiate Athletics	Hattiesburg
Assistant Professor, Trombone, Tenure-Track	01-26-2012	Open Until Filled	Faculty	Music	Hattiesburg
Technician III, Gulf Coast Research Laboratory	01-24-2012	Open Until Filled	Staff	GCCL Fisheries Research and Development	GCCL
Assistant Strength Coach	01-23-2012	Open Until Filled	Staff	Intercollegiate Athletics	Hattiesburg

The insert above tells an even more desperate story for Thisis. The Saunders administration appears to have decided, just days before USM's recent match against Auburn, to replace Thisis at the top of the Lady Eagles tennis program. On 26-Jan-2012, the Saunders administration posted an advertisement for a new head women's tennis coach. As shown above, the

application window for that position closes on 8-Feb-2012. Whatever the details of this story, it is sure to be an interesting one. Perhaps time will tell exactly what is transpiring here and elsewhere. Either way, sources tell USMNEWS.net that USM fans are likely now wondering how something could be developing on the women's tennis front while head women's basketball coach Joye Lee-McNelis has been on an 8-year run that threatens to sink the women's basketball program.