

Revisiting Sports at Southern Miss, Losing and Sanctions

Isn't it the worst of all possible worlds? A coach who [consistently loses](#)

Too Much Joye in Mudville

A Guest Editorial by Susan Green-Lewis

Since coming to "lead" USM's women's basketball program back in 2004-05, head coach Joye Lee-McNelis has struggled to rebuild that program to the level that former coach Kay James provided throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Last week's blowout loss in Hattiesburg at the hands of Hampton actually shows how Lee-McNelis' problems run deeper than building a power, as James did before. Just winning more games than she loses has proven a nearly impossible task for Lee-McNelis. That first season produced a dismal 9-19 (0.321) record, and it was followed by a modestly better record of 14-15 (0.483) in 2005-06. During her sixth season at the helm in 2009-10, Lee-McNelis "guided" the Lady Eagles to a 9-21 season (0.300), the school's worst since the mid-1970s, eclipsing Lee-McNelis' own 9-19 record from 2004-05 on the dismal scale. The 2009-10 disaster was followed in 2010-11 by a record of only 10-20 (0.333), meaning that Lee-McNelis was responsible for "leading" the Lady Eagles basketball program to its three worst individual seasons over the previous 35 years. When last season (2011-12) ended with a record of 13-18 (0.419), fans of the program must have felt as though losing had become a new normal.

and gets [popped with embarrassing sanctions](#)?

USM and the NCAA

It has been only a few months since [the USM community learned](#) that its head women's basketball coach, Joye Lee-McNelis, violated a number of NCAA regulations and was forced to sit out a game during the 2010-11 season. Sitting out that game – a 22-point defeat at the hands of Louisiana Tech University in early Jan-2011 – was punishment for Lee-McNelis' (1) requirement that a non-qualifying player participate in practice, (2) requirement that a player participate before completing mandated medical testing, and (3) decision to allow a non-qualifying player to participate in required physical activities. More recently, via Patrick Magee's [17-July-2011 report](#) for *The Hattiesburg American*, that same USM community learned of shenanigans that appear to have occurred with the USM men's tennis program. According to Magee, USM "... faces a lawsuit from a former tennis player that includes allegations of NCAA rules violations committed by former tennis coach Teddy Viator." As Magee adds, the lawsuit has been filed on behalf of Patricio Alvarado, and it names USM, the NCAA, and Viator.