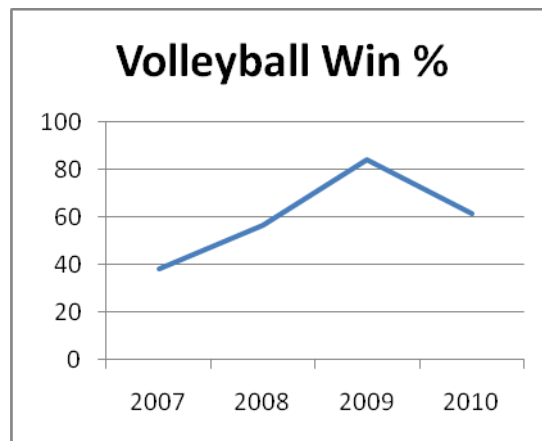


Special Report

Is it Happening Already?

The Post-Luyties Slide in USM Volleyball

As the 20-April-2010 update to [Aunt Martha's Seasons](#) stated, USMNEWS.net's correspondents have an almost uncanny ability to forecast events related to USM. The statement was made in reference to the earlier prediction (in the original report) that USM would be losing its volleyball coach, former national champion and Olympic gold medalist Ricci Luyties, to another school. That prediction came true in March of 2010, when Luyties accepted the head coaching position at the University of California at San Diego. As the update points out, Luyties carried a 44-18 record from 2008 and 2009 with him to the west coast, including a 2009 Conference USA Volleyball Championship ring.¹



USM moved quickly to hire Luyties' assistant, Abbey Sutherland, to replace the budding USM volleyball legend. However, the performance slide that correspondents alluded to began immediately, as USM's record dipped about 20 points from 2009 to 2010 (see insert above). As the players that Luyties recruited continue to depart the institution, sources say that a return to "sub .500" volleyball at USM will result.

¹ Luyties' record since the beginning of the 2008 season is 63-27. His first UCSD team advanced to the second round of the NCAA tournament. One source points out that this chapter in USM sports history is reminiscent of the old *USM Forum Message Board* comment that (to paraphrase) USM administrators are experts at *destroying the good, while promoting the bad*.