

The Farm

News Briefs from Southern Miss

6-June-2012

The 'Raynie Days' Arrived

In early Feb-2012, just before the 2012 season began, USMNEWS.net [published a report](#) entitled "Raynie Days Ahead?" That report provided details of what was referred to as a "backdoor search" for a new USM women's tennis coach. Just two months prior to that report, Raynie Theis, pictured below, was telling media that she was excited to be gearing up for her third season at the helm of USM's women's tennis program. Heading into her third season, Theis had built a 21-24 (0.457) overall record, much better than that of several other USM coaches, even though that record was sub-.500 at the time.



That report also indicated that on 26-Jan-2012, the Jeff Hammond-led USM athletics department posted an opening for the head coaching position, the same position that Theis was excited to hold at the time. The cloud created by Hammond's decision to initiate such a search likely played a major role in the team's poor performances during the 2012 season. Now (on 5-June-2012), *The Hattiesburg American* [is reporting that](#) USM has hired a new women's tennis coach. That new hire is Dominic Modise, the head coach (since 2007) at North Carolina Wesleyan College. The only mention of Theis in the *THA* report, details for which were provided by USM, is the sketchy statement, "Modise replaces Ranie [sic] Theis, who resigned to take a job in Florida." That USM-provided statement not only insinuates that Theis left USM before any search was initiation, [it also misspells](#) her name. Lastly, sources now add that this is the sort of Hammond mischief that the USM faculty senate, under the leadership of Timothy Rehner, recently endorsed in [issuing a resolution](#) asking the Mississippi IHL to hire Hammond as USM's permanent AD.

Saunders Loves Saunders

The USM faculty senate's 1-June-2012 proclamation of outgoing USM president Martha Saunders' greatness, a topic referred to in the article above, was the subject of David Tisdale's [USM presser](#) that same day. The photo below, showing faculty senate president Timothy Rehner's presentation to Saunders of a framed copy of the senate resolution (proclamation), accompanied Tisdale's presser.



Rehner told Tisdale that “[w]hat [Saunders has] done to move us forward is remarkable, and she deserves much credit. We look forward to having her become a part of the faculty governance of the university.” As regular readers of USMNEWS.net are aware, Saunders will become a rank-and-file USM faculty on 1-July-2012.