

# USM Athletics in Big Hole

## LOCAL MEDIA REPORTING DEFICIT NEARLY DOUBLED IN ONE YEAR

The financial woes in USM's athletics department are gargantuan, at least [according to](#) Patrick Magee of *The Hattiesburg American*. Magee reports that the department's deficit was \$439,255 at the end of the 2009-10 academic year, and that it nearly doubled, rising to \$790,398, during the 2010-11 academic year. With the 2011-12 academic season coming to a close, the department's total deficit is now above \$1 million and counting. An audit of the USM athletics department's finances for 2010-11 show that football was the only sport that netted a positive sum, yet this one came in at only \$13,852. The worst financial performer that year was women's basketball, which generated a budget *deficit* of about \$725,000. Men's basketball was next, with a budget *deficit* of about \$485,000.

Speaking to the media (Magee) on USM's behalf in this matter is Chad Driskell, the interim vice president for administrative affairs. According to Driskell, "[USM] . . . is in as strong a financial position as it has been in years, but it is always very concerned whenever a campus unit is not performing as well as it could. Administrative affairs and the athletic department are working closely to fully evaluate and quickly improve the economic outlook for Southern Miss athletics."

USM released 133 pages of athletics department financials to *THA's* Magee, yet interim athletics director Jeff Hammond did not respond to *THA's* requests to discuss the details scattered throughout the 133 pages. Sources tell USMNEWS.net that the situation in athletics at USM is likely to get worse before getting better. They also add that Marcus Osbey's response to Magee's article, which is shown at the end of this report, is probably on the mark when it comes to the financial wreck in USM's athletics department. They also add that Scott Openshaw's comment about former USM athletics director Richard Giannini, which is shown below next to Osbey's comment, is also intriguing.

- Marcus Osbey

The mens basketball team hasnt played any big name ranked opponents in years and last years football schedule was the worst in 10 years. Makes sense that we lost money if big name schools will pay us to come play them and we play Louisiana Tech, McNeese State, Spring Hill (NAIA) and other smaller schools with unknown programs.

- Scott Openshaw

I have a question for the HA: some are saying that recently-fired-for-mismanagement Richard Giannini has been given an office on the Southern Miss campus... Can someone verify whether or not this is true?