

2022-23 Mississippi State Postgame Quotes Mississippi State vs. LSU – February 8, 2023

Mississippi State Head Coach Chris Jans

Q: How much have you seen this team, when shots aren't falling, buy in on the defensive end and understand as long as they get stops, they can still have a chance in the game?"

CJ: "If you've got a really good basketball team, then, that's going to happen. It's easy for us to say as coaches or people that know the game, it shouldn't matter, right? You should always be able to defend and rebound. You should always be able to play hard."

"We're not built like that as humans. It's human nature to be frustrated when the ball doesn't go through the hole and not be quite as motivated on the other end. It's really easy to ask them or demand them, not to be motivated by that, but it just happens. If you've been doing it long enough, it just happens. It's nice to see them stay locked in. It's something we preach all the time and try to get them to play at a high level in all facets. But especially when the ball isn't going through the hole, you've got to rely on it. It's got to be in your back pocket. It's got to be our DNA, and that was good to see for us to continue to do that."

Q: DJ Jeffries has been one of your better defenders, and the shots aren't always falling for him. Tonight, he hits 5-for-6 from three, and you've been very vocal about your guys continuing to shoot even when they're struggling. How happy were you to see that and see the night that he had tonight?"

CJ: "I was happy for all of us. I got in the coaches' locker room, with four or five around, and I'm like 'They're going to think we're the [Golden State] Warriors now, we made 6 three's. They're going to think, what happened?' Certainly, that's not a big number, but I'm happy for D.J."

"I've talked about other guys working at their craft, and D.J. is one of them. I don't always say that about everybody. Sometimes, I just don't say it. I'm not going to say if they're not, but D.J. is one of those guys that sticks with it. When I'm walking out of that gym, I see him repping his jumper and working on his rhythm. He's been making them."

"If you go watch him workout you'd be like, 'What's the deal??' It looks good. It leaves his hand, it looks good. It's got a good form. He's obviously experienced, but it just gets to be mental at times. So, I'm just really happy for him to reap the dividends of it at and kind of take the lid off the basket. We needed it because if you take his numbers out, we were 1-of-10 from three. It just looked rhythm, and it helped his whole game. Four assists, zero turnovers, and it wasn't like he wasn't creating for others. Like you said, he's been really consistent on the defensive backboards, then, being one of our better defenders."

Q: We've asked you a lot about Shak [Shakeel Moore] in the last two or three weeks. He may be on one of the more consistent runs of his Mississippi State tenor, what has made the difference for him over the last few weeks since you put him in the starting lineup?

CJ: "I believe you'd have to ask him, only he really knows. I told him in the locker room, I said, 'Man, if my coach told me to quit turning down shots, he wouldn't have to tell me twice.' I'm barking at him during the game, 'Shoot the ball!' We talked about the shot fake. But for how we play and who we are, he's got to shoot the ball. He's got to have a scoring mentality. He's always been that way from reputation, more of a scorer, but we need to think shoot and score. Not just score and get in the lane. He's crafty. Obviously, very athletic, but he needs to take that role and dive into. [He needs to] Think score and be more aggressive for us. His teammates are telling him too."

Q: Shawn Jones Jr. made some big contributions for you guys tonight, what did you think about the night he had?

CJ: "He looked good. He makes those plays where you go, 'Oh wow', even me. He's so lanky and long. He just moves so well out there. He's one of those guys where you just watch him run, and you're like, 'He's a hooper'. He had some great finishes, and he played with more confidence. He hasn't shot the ball well. He's had limited attempts, but he shoots and makes jumpers at practice. He just plays with a lot of confidence. He belongs out there. In the first half, he was on the floor. That's when we kind of got a little bit of breathing room, and he was a big part of it."

Forward D.J. Jeffries

Q: How good did that feel for you to see the ball go into the hoop?

DJJ: "Words can't describe it. I've been working so hard to finally hit some shots. The last couple games, I've been missing some of those shots, but tonight I came out with confidence. When I got it, I just caught it. I didn't hesitate, and I didn't think about it. I just shot in confidence and the results were good tonight. I'm keeping that same metabolism going forward and am just [going] to keep shooting with no hesitation to keep moving forward."

Q: Did you know that you were getting close to those one thousand points?

DJJ: "Yeah, I know it coming into the game. I told myself that I needed to get at least get 13 points, but I didn't know that I was going to get 18. Once I got 1,000 points, it was a big relief and a big milestone in my career. I'm proud to be a 1,000-point scorer, and I thank God for that."

Q: How important was it to see that first shot go in and then go from there?

DJJ: "It was a big confidence boost. When I see one go in, it boosts my confidence up and I came out here for more. That one was a big one, if I would've missed it, I probably would have kept shooting with confidence but I'm glad it went in."

Guard Shawn Jones Jr.

Q: "It's been a few games since you scored, how do you feel that helped your confidence tonight?"

SJJ: "It's really big for the team that I could contribute to that. I really just stay focused because I don't worry too much about scoring. I just stay focused defensively and listen to what coach is saying then let the game come to me."

LSU Head Coach Matt McMahon

Opening Statement

MM: "Really tough to go on the road and start a game down 10-0 against a team that is this good defensively. So, credit to Mississippi State for that. Then, we were up 22-16 there. Credit to our guys, we really fought back. I thought our halfcourt defense in the first half was terrific. They (State) scored 15 of their 25 off our turnovers or off offensive rebounds. Then, we did not finish the half in strong fashion. We could not score, credit to them there. Then, a couple unfortunate bounces there, almost had a shot clock violation that turned into a three-point play there to end the half. Then, to start the second half, I thought they just came out and punched us in the face. We were unable to respond."

Q: Can you talk about fatigue at the end of the first half?

MM: "I thought our halfcourt defense in the first half was fantastic. We were flying around, guys were in gaps. After they hit the two three's to start the game, they (State) didn't make another three the rest of the half. The second half, however, our halfcourt defense really let us down. They executed well, but you are not going to win on the road when your opponent shoots 65 percent, especially as difficult as it is for us to score the ball."

Q: Can you talk about K.J. Williams and Derek Fountain tonight?

MM: "Again, credit to Mississippi State. They're switching pressure defense, and that makes it really tough on you. We were unable to take advantage of their fives guarding our perimeter players out front. They did a good job of fronting and taking away the post-up opportunities as well. I thought Jalen Reed had some good minutes off the bench. If you look at the efficiency scoring the ball between K.J., Derek and Jalen [Reed], they had a good night. We just weren't able to get them enough touches in the scoring area to give us chances to win the game."

Q: Was State's defense and points off of turnovers a factor in the final result?

MM: "No question, that's a top-10 defense in the country. They showed that again tonight. They make you pay. Those 15 turnovers turned into 20 points the other way. We did get nine steals, but we were only able to turn that into 10 points there. I thought we had some good rim protection in the first half. In the second half, there were a lot of uncontested layups. We just weren't able to get the job done defensively."