

2021-22 Mississippi State Basketball Postgame Quotes Mississippi State at No. 13 Texas Tech – January 29, 2022

Mississippi State Head Coach Ben Howland

Opening Statement

BH: “Well, that was a very, very tough day to be handled the way they handled us. They defended us so well. They forced 22 turnovers which turned into 24 points, and we only shot 30-percent from the field. They scored in the paint all day long, 44 points. I was telling on the radio just now that I think they [Texas Tech] is the best team in their league. They’ve got to be one of the best teams in the country, and I’d be surprised if they’re not an [NCAA] Elite Eight, [NCAA] Final Four team.”

“Having studied them on film and seeing they’re older, they’re big and strong. They have an unorthodox way to defend by forcing everything sideline, everything baseline. They’re very physical. They’re very skilled inside, and you look at [Bryson] Williams and [Kevin] Obanor, they’re really good players.”

“We didn’t handle their defensive pressure at all today, and that was really frustrating. We had 22 turnovers, and you just can’t turn it over against good teams. The one thing I told our team afterwards is we had the toughest schedule of anybody in the country this week— [playing] at Kentucky [and] at Texas Tech. And, you know, Tech is just a monster in terms of how big and physical and strong they are. The fact they just keep bringing them in off the bench, they don’t lose a step when they’re substituting.”

Q: Was any of the defensive looks they gave you surprising at all?

BH: “Yeah, but it’s harder to simulate their size, their strength and their physicality. They’re so much bigger than us at every guard position. They’re 6-6 across [the lineup], and they’re bringing in 6-6 [off the bench]. They’re very physical, very strong and their inside guys are excellent passers. When you look at their team today, they had 20 assists of their 29 baskets. They’re excellent interior passers.”

Q: What was Texas Tech doing on the offensive end to make it tough for you guys?

BH: “When you have 24 of those points today on turnovers that turned into easy baskets. That’s 12 baskets right there, maybe 10 [two’s] and two three’s. But those baskets right there are very high percentage. They hurt us some scoring around the basket with their interior play. Their two big guys, I think, are really special. They had 13 and 10 [points]. You saw [Bryson] Williams had 33 at Kansas the other day in a game they should have won where they were up five with a minute to go in one of the overtimes.”

“I was really impressed with their team going into today’s game and even more impressed after seeing them. They did a great job attacking the rim. They did an outstanding job in the first half with [Adonis] Arms having 15 points. He was the one guy that really hurt us in the first half. I think the most anyone else had was four [points]. So, he was the one guy that went off on us. We did not do a good job with him.”

Q: How much do you think their unorthodox defense played into your turnovers?

BH: “It’s hard because they’re really on one side of the floor. Playing at a boisterous crowd on the road made it difficult for our players to see the skip passes on the opposite end of the floor. It’s like a zone because everyone is loaded up on one side. They double in the post as well. We had a good post feed early on but threw it out of bounds. We had the right look but didn’t execute. Their doubling in the post was an issue because we only scored 16 points in the paint.”

Q: You mentioned you wouldn't watch this game on film with the team. Why is that?

BH: "It's because we've got to move on to Tuesday. Tomorrow, we're back [at practice] instead of having a day off. We have to walk through their stuff [South Carolina] and practice again on Monday. When you get beat that badly, you have to flush it and move on. We won't dwell on this at all. Everyone on the team felt horrible about how we played. I'm not going to belabor the point. We've lost two in a row to two of the best programs in the nation [at Kentucky and at Texas Tech]. We've got to come in and get a win on Tuesday against a feisty South Carolina team."

Guard Iverson Molinar

Q: Take us through that loss. How was the defense able to overwhelm you all?

IM: "I feel like we did a bad job executing. They've got an amazing defense, and I felt like we didn't execute what we practiced."

Q: What was Texas Tech doing offensively to cause you guys to struggle?

IM: "They moved the ball, executed their plays and cut hard. We've just got to bounce back from this and play hard next game."

Q: How do you guys rebound from this?

IM: "We've just got to stay positive. We've got to be consistent. There's a lot of games left in the season, and we've got a lot of games left to go."