

2022-23 Mississippi State Men's Basketball Postgame Quotes

Mississippi State at Georgia – January 11, 2023

Head Coach Chris Jans

Q: What are the biggest things you saw from tonight that you'd like to clean up going forward?

CJ: "You know, when you're on the road, there's always pivotal possessions and always pivotal shots for both teams. I don't know if it was tied or a one-point difference, at the last media timeout with 3:45 to go, but there were going to be a bunch of them. Certainly, we wanted do-overs up to that point, but with four to play, it was going to come down to making big plays. We had some great looks. We had the guys shooting the ball that we wanted to shoot the ball and had some offensive rebound kickouts, but we didn't knock them down. There are shots, that when you watch the game of basketball, you expect the ball to go in. We just didn't, we didn't make the critical shots at critical times down the stretch. It got away from us a little bit, and they made their free throws down the stretch to keep us at bay."

Q: How much do you think free throws accounted for the difference in the game tonight?

CJ: "I'll let you guys smarter than me try to dissect that and figure that all out. We were 7-of-22, and it's become contagious for us. I can't remember a four-game stretch that was anything quite like this. Certainly, I've been around teams that had poor free throw shooting numbers for a season, and some individual games where that cost us, but it's like it's become a disease within our program. It's my job to try and help them. I'm not helping them enough. I've tried different things mentally, tried to work with guys individually and our staff was doing the same."

Q: When key shots don't fall at the end of the game, is there anything you can do to counter it?

CJ: "We had great shots. I'll be honest with you – with how game unfolded, it was how we needed it to unfold. It was choppy, and possessions were big. We changed our defenses up, and that helped us. We struggled with the middle ball screen there in the second half. So, we switched our coverage. They [the players] did a good job on the fly of doing that. At the end of the day, to win on the road, you've got to make crucial baskets down the stretch when it's a [one] possession game, and they did. Give Georgia a lot of credit, they made the shots when they counted. If you had told me before the game, we'd have nine turnovers and 14 offensive rebounds, I would've said I liked our chances, but unfortunately it wasn't enough."

Q: What gives you the confidence that these guys will knock down those key shots going forward?

CJ: "I'm around them in practice. It's pretty obvious we're not going to be one of the leading shooting teams. We're poor in all three categories, but we make them at a better rate against good defense. We're making them against each other, and our defense is pretty stout for the most part. So, I know they can do it. We made shots in the last 12 minutes of our last game to pull away in a win at home. Unfortunately, tonight, those shots didn't go down for us."

Forward Cameron Matthews

Q: What do you feel like needs to be cleaned up going forward with this team?

CM: "Obviously, small things like free throws. I look at it as defensively we need to clean up fouls. They got 25 points from the line. If we cut that in half, then obviously we win the game. So, [it's making] free throws and holding them from the line."

Q: How frustrating it is when you guys are struggling from the free throw line?

CM: "It's real frustrating knowing that we are getting the same opportunities, and we're just not able to knock them down. Tip the hat to Georgia, they played a good game and just made a few more plays than us."

Q: How do you guys practice free throws in practice

CM: "Before practice, we get 100 free throws in, or make 50 before film."

Q: How tough is it to win games with a low scoring total?

CM: "I look at it as long as the game is close, that's where we want to be especially with these tough road games in the SEC. I don't really look at the low scoring as a deficiency. We're in the game. We just have got to make more stops and put the ball in the basket."

Q: With another road game coming up at Auburn, how important would it be to get a win on the road in the SEC?

CM: "It's a must win to get back on the right track. We have Tennessee again following that. So, we have to get moving in the right direction going to Saturday."

Q: You guys are getting good looks and just missed some shots. Is it just a mental thing right now?

CM: "We've got to step up there and make the shots when we get them. We can't shy away from it. We've got to step up there, be confident and know we can make the shot."

Q: How frustrating is it when you are having success with free throws in practice, but on the court the numbers aren't where you would want them to be?"

CM: "We can't get in our head. We just have to get up there trust our form, trust our work and try to imitate it from practice."