

2022-23 Mississippi State Men's Basketball Postgame Quotes

Mississippi State vs. South Carolina – January 31, 2023

Head Coach Chris Jans

Q: *What did you think about your team's effort to get over the hump on the road tonight?*

CJ: "For the most part, I thought it was good. We had a good start. Unfortunately, we didn't close the half very well. It was like déjà vu from Saturday afternoon [against TCU], but they came out in the second half and really reestablished themselves. They had the back-to-back three's when they cut it to six. After that, it was close to double figures for the rest of the game."

"I thought they had the right mindset. We got the ball inside. We didn't shoot as many three's as I would've anticipated. It was good. I'm disappointed in the number of turnovers. We just had some silly, casual passes. We can't be doing that. I'm definitely happy that we got the win."

Q: *After they cut the lead to 6, you changed to a 1-3-1 defense. Did that turn the game around?*

CJ: "Yeah, Coach [James] Miller is the one who suggested it. He does the matchups. So, he's in-tune with exactly who the other team has on the floor all the time. He just said that this would be a good time for 13 [our 1-3-1 defense]. I trusted him and fired away. We went back-to-back possessions with it. They didn't have some of their best shooters in the game, and it really worked out for us. I can't take credit for that. I have to give Coach Miller the tip of the cap for having good timing for changing the defense. It really helped us at a key moment in the game."

Q: *What was the game plan against Gregory 'GG' Jackson?*

CJ: "We wanted to just make it really hard. We make him a volume scorer. Be real physical with him, nothing easy and he made a bomb. One of his four makes was a bomb, and we were right there. We try to frustrate him if we could. He's still new to college basketball. He's really talented, but we got some older guys who aren't going to fear anybody. They're going to take on challenges. I thought we did a really good job on him for the majority of the night."

Q: *It looks like Tyler Stevenson continues to improve as he gets more experience playing SEC basketball.*

CJ: "I love Tyler. I have talked on-and-off radio about that. He must be getting a little more confident. I barked at him on a pass, and he barked right back at me. That's not like him. It took me back and I thought 'Ok Tyler, let's go.' I kind of like it. He gets off the court and says, 'Coach we're good.' I told him I promise were good."

"He didn't play a ton of minutes in the first half, but he was 3-for-5 in the minutes that he played. Because of that, he got more minutes in the second half. During one of the media timeouts, he got cut in the mouth and looked like a fighter. He had blood all up in there. He was a big spark."

"Shak [Shakeel Moore] was 9-for-11. [He] Turned the ball over too much, but he got his hands on a lot of balls [on defense]. [He] Got some steals, got out in transition and had some excellent finishes. I do prefer to have a guy [scoring off the bench]. But at the time, we were on the bad side of the column and needed to switch it up. It's worked out for us thus far."

Q: For this team to be able to outscore South Carolina 19-2 on the fastbreak, how important is it do that?

CJ: "As you all know, we're trying to push it and trying to score early. It's the old school way. The extremes of offense and trying to score in the first seven or eight seconds of the shot clock before they're 5-on-5, just trying to get some outnumbered situations. If not, don't slow it down but make sure we're getting what we want."

"We try and make them have to guard for a period of time where they can make a defensive mistake, and we can take advantage of it. Sometimes, it bites us. We will get into a shot clock situation, and now our numbers are awful in shot clock situations. I'm sure they're plenty of people out there that would say, 'Why would you wait?' We don't need to be in a 70 or 75 possession games either. So, there's a lot more to it than just that. We definitely are encouraging them to run, share it, push it and really explore what the defense gives them when we get a rebound or get it out of the net."

Q: Do you feel this win is a huge step for this club?

CJ: "No disrespect to South Carolina, but obviously South Carolina isn't near the top of our league this year. They certainly are competitive. They beat Kentucky on the road. We knew that this was one that we had to get. We had to get a road win against a team that we felt like we matched up with pretty well."

"We wanted to carry that momentum into Saturday when we are going to play a really good, really coached and really talented Missouri team. They have all the numbers. They have all the metrics and all the numbers. We get them at home, and we got to play them twice. In order for us to have that momentum, we had to take care of this road win first. I'm happy for our guys. Every time we go on the road now, we don't have to talk about the what ifs. We don't have to talk about that fact that we haven't won an SEC road game. I thought it was crucial."

Q: You need to pack the hump on Saturday with this good Missouri team coming to town.

CJ: "I have been so impressed with our crowds. I was so impressed with the number of people and especially the students. We play Saturday at 5 p.m. We got a couple game win streak, and these guys are playing really hard and really well. I'm hoping that people will come out and support them."

Guard Shakeel More

Q: How does it feel to get an SEC road win for the first time?

SM: "It feels great. Our team continues to stick together and fight together. I just think we pulled it away [in the second half]."

Q: Why are you able to score in the paint against bigger guys? How do you get inside so easily off the dribble?

SM: "Fearlessness. Just knowing how to change the pace, not letting anybody speed you up, and experience."

Q: How do you feel playing as a starter as opposed to coming off the bench?

SM: "I just do whatever Coach [Jans] wants from me, and whatever I can do to help this team. I do like starting. At the collegiate level, I'm sure everyone would love that. It's a great thing to do."

Q: "What has changed for this team offensively in these last four or five games?"

SM: "We got that taste out of our mouths. We had a losing streak going on. We capitalized on it and got two back-to-back wins. That's good for us. We need to continue to play and execute."