

**2023-24 Mississippi State Men's Basketball Postgame Quotes**  
**Mississippi State vs. Northwestern – November 19, 2023**  
**Hall of Fame Tipoff Tournament Finals**

**Mississippi State Head Coach Chris Jans**

***Q: How big was it to get back within two points before halftime after the way how Northwestern started the game?***

**CJ:** "It was like déjà vu, sitting in this gym yesterday watching Northwestern play against Rhode Island. It was 22-2 [Northwestern] before they [Rhode Island] got their eyes open, and they did it to us today. Normally, I don't love calling those early timeouts, but that was in my recent memory. I was like, 'We can't let them feel good and stretch it out.' ... We were defending fine. They were defending at an all-time elite level to start the game. We really struggled getting open looks and getting downhill. Obviously, as the game wore on, we got better at it."

***Q: Was there a change made defensively against the high-ball screen later in the game?***

**CJ:** "We were trying to not pick it up quite as high. We were trying to get our bigs maybe to loosen up a little bit at the point of the ball screen to try to give room for the guard to get back. The idea was to just keep both in front. Sometimes, you just start a game, and it's like going out in the cold where you've got to adjust your body a little bit. We had to adjust."

"They're a well-schooled team. We knew they're well-schooled. We knew they'd be in the gaps. We knew they'd be hard to score against. I felt over time, our guys just got more comfortable. Certainly, their confidence grew as we started to mount the comeback."

***Q: Were the turnovers caused by our trying to overdrizzle against their gap defense?***

**CJ:** "Exactly, we had some sloppy ones. But certainly, they had a lot to do with it. Our turnover percentage was 37 early [percent]. So, almost four out of 10 possessions, we weren't getting a shot off. We only had 20 shots on goal at halftime. You know it's hard to win when you only get 20 shots up in a [half of a] college basketball game. So, they got better at it."

"At the end of the game, we only ended up with a 24 percent turnover percentage ... But considering how we started, I thought we settled down. I think we had three or four turnovers in the whole second half, but that was the big key. I think we ended up getting a bunch more shots at the goal."

***Q: Are you pleased with rebounding today, or does it need to get better?***

**CJ:** "Coach [Williams], it always needs to get better, you know that. We've been done there, done that with the rebounding game ... It's all about opportunities available for rebounds individually or collectively as a team, and how many we're getting from a percentage standpoint."

"Same thing with turnovers both ways on offense and defense. Sometimes, you've got a 15 turnover game, but it's a huge possession game. Sometimes, you have an eight turnover game, and it's a low possession game. It's all the same. It's all about percentages, and we taught our guys what that's about. We use that kind of language in the film room, on the court, certainly in our timeouts, halftimes, etcetera. It just makes sense."

***Q: What about Josh Hubbard today?***

**CJ:** “What about him, man? He was a big reason why we won the game. The kid’s got a ton of confidence. I talked about him already in an infant career, but I don’t get tired of talking about him because he’s all about the right stuff. He’s earned these moments already because of his work ethic, because of the type of kid he is, the quality of his character and the work that he’s put in prior to coming here. He’s ready for this stage, it’s very obvious. He’s just mature beyond his ears.”

***Q: How big are these two Power 5 conference wins early in the season?***

**CJ:** “Power 5 wins don’t matter per say from a numbers perspective in terms of Quad 1, Quad 2, Quad 3 and all of that kind of jazz. But, it’s still our third Power 5 win in a very young season. We attempted to challenge our guys a bit more. You never know how the teams we pair up with are going to be. You’re guesstimating when you’re doing the scheduling. You don’t know at the end of the day how they’re going to be, but we wanted to try to put ourselves in a position to try to challenge our guys, and hopefully get some good opportunities.”

“Like you said, we won’t know until the season unfolds. But I guarantee you, they just congratulated us as we walked through, and we were like, ‘We’re rooting for you all year long. Go get this one and do well in the Big Ten slash Pac-12, because I know you all are rooting for us.’ That’s just the way college basketball is right now.”