

2024-25 Mississippi State Men's Basketball Postgame Quotes
No. 22 Mississippi State vs. No. 3 Florida – February 11, 2025

Mississippi State Head Coach Chris Jans

Q: What did you see on Florida's 17-point run to open the second half?

CJ: "I just didn't expect it. In the first half, we were frustrated with ourselves offensively. I thought we set the tone and had a good defense in the first half. We rebounded the ball very well in the first half. That was a big goal for us. For whatever reason, we were just out of sync in terms of all five guys being when we're going from defense to offense on what we're trying to run and what we're trying to do. We just weren't where we needed to all the time. It wasn't just one guy. One time, it was this guy. Another time, it was the next guy, and it was frustrating for us. We didn't feel like we were giving ourselves the best chance to take advantage of what we were trying to do against their defense."

"Certainly, being 2-for-15 from three going into halftime, and having Cam [Cameron Matthews] get his second foul with seven minutes left [in the first half]. You're almost saying, 'Hey, we survived this a little bit that way [to be ahead at halftime].'"

"Then, the locker room was pretty animated by both players and coaches in a really positive way. We made a couple of slight adjustments to what they were doing against us. For whatever reason, we got off to a horrible start. Cameron got his third foul in the first or second possession into the second half certainly didn't help. It kind of deflated some people, in my opinion, because he's such a big part of our personality and our spirit on the court. We had to play plenty of stretches without him, but we just didn't react very well to the start of the second half."

Q: You take a few timeouts early in the second half. What was your message to the team during your first timeout of the second half, and where do you think your players failed to respond?

CJ: "At that point, I was trying to get a rise out of them. At that point, I was trying to challenge them. I was a little shocked and just shocked by the way we were playing. We didn't have the type of urgency and fight that we showed the majority in the first half from where I sat. I may feel different after I see the film, but we let a couple of made shots by them directly affect our energy in a negative way."

"You can imagine us over the course of the season talking about getting to the next play and not letting one mistake compound into another. Just keep playing, keep competing and not get thrown off by things of that nature. We obviously didn't do a very good job of that. The game changed quickly. The momentum changed right from the jump out of the gate. At that point, they had all of the energy and all of the vibe. We were just trying to figure out a way to climb back into it, which in the end, we never did."

Q: Turnovers haven't been an issue for this team. However, they were a problem early in the second half tonight. What did you see from those possessions tonight?

CJ: "I don't know what we had at halftime [turnover wise], but it was a fairly manageable number. That was a big part of why they went on the run. We gave them the ball, and we gave them extra possessions. As you said, it's been a great stat in non-conference, it's been okay in the SEC. When you're giving a team more opportunities, especially with live ball turnovers, those are the hardest thing to guard."

Q: What is your concern level right now, and what can you do as a coach to get the team back on the track?

CJ: "I'm certainly concerned. I'm a little shocked because we had a great practice yesterday. We're coming off a very tough and well-earned road victory. The vibe was really, really good, The shootaround was one of the better ones that we've had. They were excited, and their togetherness was showing. I thought, for the most part, other than our offense in the first half, we were playing okay and pretty good at times. As a staff, we were disappointed that it was only a one-point game. We thought we had a chance to have a bigger margin, but we didn't."

"My experience with these guys – tomorrow will be an off day for us, since we don't play until Saturday. We'll regroup on Thursday afternoon, and we'll talk about where we go from here. Certainly, we're well aware of what's next for us."

Guard Josh Hubbard and Forward KeShawn Murphy

Q: What did you see from Florida's 17-point run to start the half?

KM: "Basically, they just came out hungrier than we did. We started out flat. We got down on ourselves for some reason, and it showed. We came out at a bad pace, and they got the lead on us."

Q: Turnovers haven't been an issue for your team this season. Why did you make so many tonight?

JH: "They pressured us and got into us. Like you said, we had 15 turnovers. That's unusual for us, we have to pick that up. They just did an incredible job defensively, and we needed to figure out what to adjust."

Q: What was Coach Jans' message when he called the two timeouts in the second half?

JH: "He was trying to keep us encouraged as a unit and said that we just gave up. It's easy to play when you're down. We were up one at halftime, I think. We should've come out like we were down. I just feel like we could've had a better mood about it and played off it."

Q: You've had a tough nine-game stretch, how are you going to respond to get back on track?

JH: "We're just going to try our best to move on from this one. This one hurt for sure, but we've got another one Saturday in Oxford. So, we just have to get back and get to the drawing board. We've got to go back to square one, practice more and get shots up."

Q: You have had a handful of opportunities against top-10 teams this season, but you haven't been able to finish the job. What is it going to take to get over the hump?

KM: "Just staying solid from start to finish and playing all 40 minutes at a high level. We've got to play our style of basketball. I feel like early in the season, we played our basketball and stayed together. I feel like we're just breaking into pieces a little bit, and we've got to stick to what we know and stick to our identity. We're losing that a little bit."

Q: What can be done at this point in the season to improve your defense and the team's defensive mindset?

JH: "Yeah, it all starts in practice. I believe how we practice is how we play. We just have to get at it in practice and get to the ball. We need good rotations and to get box outs. We've got to find our identity like Murph [KeShawn Murphy] said."

"Rebounding is definitely one of the issues. So, we just have to get back to the drawing board. Like you said, we've got to get back in that defensive mindset and trust one another."

Florida Head Coach Todd Golden

Opening Statement

TG: "I'm incredibly proud of our team and really incredibly proud of our program. I thought our coaches did a great job of preparing our players. We've instilled a little mental toughness and a little physical toughness into our group all year. I feel like over the last couple of weeks, it's really come together for our team in the way we played this last three-game stretch. After the Tennessee loss, we've beaten Vandy, Auburn and then came in against a very good Mississippi State team and controlled the game. Getting a lead as big as 24 in the second half. Losing [Alex] Condon 30 seconds into the game, and not having A-Mart [Alijah Martin] tonight, our team has continued to show a great next-man-up mentality. I'm just very proud. We've got to keep it going. It's not going to be easy, but this team has shown some great resolve over the last week and a half."

Q: Can you give an update on Alex Condon's injury?

TG: "Yeah, good news on the x-ray. It came back clean. At this time, we think it's a low ankle sprain, which is obviously better than a high ankle sprain or anything more serious. It did not look good. I didn't like the play. I thought it was a dirty play. It was exacerbated by the pull-down, the horse collar. Really disappointed for that to happen to one of your very good players early in the ball game. At the same time, I think it lit a fire under our group. I thought we responded the right way, and I thought our guys did a heck of a job of stepping up in his absence."

Q: What were the halftime adjustments?

TG: "I thought we played pretty well offensively in the first half. I thought we played pretty well defensively. We didn't make shots in the first half. We were 6-for-20 from three, but we got good looks. We were playing the right way, and we played how we wanted to. Defensively, we held them to 33."

"Our issue was rebounding. We were minus ten in the first half on the glass. The conversation at halftime was, offensively, we've been good enough. We'll make some shots. Defensively, we've been good enough, but we're not going to win this game if we allow them to outrebound us again in the second half. That was going to be the determining factor. And the fact that we finished only minus eleven. So, only a one-rebound disadvantage in the second half, I thought was huge. In the first five minutes of the second half, we did a great job of getting misses and not allowing them to get second chances. We were able to get out in transition, which we weren't able to do in the first half tonight."