

## 2024-25 Mississippi State Basketball Postgame Quotes

Mississippi State vs. Southeastern Louisiana – November 12, 2024

### Mississippi State Head Coach Chris Jans

***Q: I asked Shawn Jones [Jr.] about the 8-0 run they had at the end of the first half to cut the deficit.***

***What did you see from the team picking it up in the second half with a 12-2 run that you guys started the second half with?***

CJ: “Certainly disappointed with the end of the half. I remember it being 40-32, and that is when it got funky to me. We didn’t put them in a good position as a staff, and I called a play that didn’t make any sense. We didn’t take advantage of our personnel. We kind of blew a possession, and I was mad. Then, they scored again. Then, we had to play the two-for-one game at the end of the half. We missed a short one, and they scored again. We got the game where we wanted it there at the end of the half, but we just didn’t finish it very well.”

“You didn’t ask me about it. But, at the start of the game, we had been getting out of the gate so strong. We didn’t tonight. But, it was good with a little struggle there. Then, it was pretty close, and boom, we got a little separation. Then, we didn’t end the half very well. So, at halftime, we talked about reestablishing ourselves, because we didn’t get out to a great start and tried to get the game going in the direction that it did.”

“The first play of the game, at least two if not all three, we turned people over and had [Josh] Hubbard and [Cameron] Matthews on a two-on-one, and we got nothing out of it. I thought it was a bad omen for the rest of the night. We could’ve got the crowd into it a little bit more, and the juices would’ve been flowing, but who knows how the night would’ve unfolded after that.”

***Q: In the first half, you put on the full-court press for a few minutes to generate a few turnovers and briefly in the second half. Was that something you noticed in the scouting report you could take advantage of, or was it to try and find a spark at that point in the game?***

CJ: “It’s something we utilize at different times, and we’ve done it since we arrived. It’s more of a feel thing, and it’s nothing that we saw in the report. The game wasn’t the pace we wanted it to be. We obviously are trying to play a little faster than we have in years past, and maybe not have to guard quite as long in the half-court. We got at least three ten-second calls and a fourth that was close with another couple of turnovers. It was good to just change the tempo and mood of the game.”

***Q: You were leading 60-52, and Josh got a four-point spurt to go up by 12. He also had that four-point play in the first half. He seems to give your team a big basket when needed.***

CJ: “He was. We had a group in there when we got up with one of our bigger leads and had Dellquan [Warren] in. I put him in a tough spot. When you think about it, he has obviously been one of the best players for his AAU teams and high schools. Now, here he is in the second half sitting on the bench and coming off cold, expecting him to play well. I wanted to see how he’d react and play, but we will all learn and grow from it.”

“If the game had been a little closer, I would have subbed earlier and got some regular guys back out there, but we need to learn and grow. I did it with Jeremy Foumena in the first half as well. When you have the opportunity in these games, you’ve got to take advantage of it. We’re not disrespecting our opponent, but the score is what it is. We’ve got to get some guys experience and see where we’re at. Josh [Hubbard] and Kanye [Clary] were subbed back in there together and he hit a couple of baskets to get us a little more comfortable there.”

***Q: There’s been three games and three different starting lineups so far. How far into the season do you think you can go before you have to start determining who your five are?***

CJ: “It’s a great question. I’m not sure I’m there yet. Fortunately, we’ve got some time to think about it. I had told the team prior to the first game that this was going to happen. We’re going to switch it up for who knows how long. But, at least the first three games, we’re going to have a lot of discussions about it as a staff.”

“I don’t know what’s the best [lineup is] yet. We don’t have to figure it out. I know starting is important to some kids. But, at the end of the day, once the ball’s tipped everybody comes off the bench. Once the five starters are done, they’re all coming off [the bench]. Everybody has to understand how to come off the bench because everybody does, other than in the first run that the first guys get when the ball is tipped. That’s something we talk about with our team all the time.”

***Q: Just three games in, a work in progress on offense and defense. You held a team under 60 points that’s a pretty good perimeter shooting team. Where would you gauge your defensive effort in these first few games?***

CJ: “I like where we’re at. If you were really paying attention, it’s a little bit of a different scheme than last year because of our personnel. We’re more hyper-focused on turning the ball over and trapping the ball a little bit more than we’ve been in the past. With our personnel, I feel like that’s going to be a big part of who we’re. We’ve got to turn the other team over to make up for some deficiencies that we have when the ball is shot, with some lack of size and defensive rebounding that we’ve been accustomed to the last couple of years.”

“I feel pretty good. We were better on the defensive glass tonight than we were the last game, which is a good sign. They had a little bit of size out there tonight, maybe compared to the first games anyway. Offensively, if you were to ask me that before the game, I would’ve said we were in great shape. The ball didn’t go through the hole tonight. In the end, I’m going to be happy that it didn’t, and that we still stuck together and found ways to win because we all know the games aren’t going to be as lopsided as the first couple.”

***Q: Going back to the starting lineup question, what are you specifically looking for out of your core guys that you’re going to be relying on mostly?***

CJ: “Play to our personality all the time, don’t deviate. The guys that have been around know who we are and what we are. At the same time, push, pull, drag others along with them every single day. Continue to be the leaders that they had been and get everyone to understand how we play to win. The early results are really good. The guys that should be talking in huddles are. Our huddles have been tight. They’ve been tighter this year than in years past which I like to see.”

“These guys that have been around with Hubb [Josh Hubbard], Mook [Cameron Matthews], Shawn Jones [Jr.], and Murph [KeShawn Murphy], you know those guys, and they understand. They’ve been there, done that. They’ve won games away from the Hump, and they’ve won games in the non-league. They’ve won games in the SEC. Certainly, we’ve got a long way to go, but I hope that they continue to talk behind the scenes and even in the games about staying the course with what we’re trying to do.”

***Q: Strong play out of Kanye Clary on both sides of the ball, what are you seeing out of him with progressing in your system?***

CJ: “He’s fast, isn’t he? He’s fast with that ball. He’s downhill, he’s strong and he can create for himself and create for others. Tonight, he only had two assists, but if the ball goes in on some of the passes he makes, he probably has six or seven.”

“I’ve got to make sure he doesn’t get frustrated by that. We’ve got to make those plays for us to be really good. He’s a spark plug. Offensively, he keeps getting better. I wouldn’t have probably called him a defensive guy before he arrived, but he’s jumping into that and understood for him to get the minutes he wants to play. He’s going to have to play both ends, and the results are so far so good.

**Guards Josh Hubbard and Shawn Jones Jr.**

***Q: Shawn, the Lions ended the first half on an 8-0 run and cut the deficit. What did Coach Jans have to say about that in the locker room?***

SJJ: “We’re playing to our opponent’s level. Just keep hooping and play harder. We aren’t being grimy. We need to get back to being grimy, getting steals, getting on the floor and making the game messy for the other team.”

***Q: Shawn, you had a huge stretch in the second half. You had six straight points, a big block, and then got down and drew the foul. What did you think about that stretch?***

SJ: “I just have to bring energy. I felt like we weren’t playing hard enough, like how we’re supposed to play. We were supposed to be killing. I felt like when I came out there, I brought that nastiness and got defense involved in some energy so we could all play together.”

***Q: Josh, it seemed like every time your team needed a basket, you were able to provide it. How do you feel about your game tonight?***

JH: “They played great defense in the first half, credit to them. They applied pressure early on all of us, and we adjusted to that. I just reacted to what the defense gave me, and I think we all did a good job of that.”

***Q: Kanye Clary, in the second half tonight, he made some pretty big plays. What have you seen in the first few games alongside of him that may not have shown up on the scoresheet?***

JH: “Yeah, especially tonight, he gave us a spark when we needed it. He’s a huge player for our team. He’s definitely going to be a breakout player, like you said. We all believe in him, and we’re just grateful for having him on our team.”

**Q: *The team has had three different lineups in three games. How exciting is it for you to see so many options offensively and defensively?***

**JH:** “That’s just the special team that we have. When we look at our depth, anybody can play anywhere. Not a lot of teams have that. When you look on the bench and see five or six guys that can battle with you, it’s just a blessing to have.”

**Q: *What are seeing from guys in the post at the center position?***

**JH:** “I’ve seen a lot of toughness. They work hard in practice, and it’s not easy in the paint. They’ve got a lot of pressure on them, but I think they’ve done a tremendous job in practice and the games of holding down their own. We’re just grateful to have them.”

**Q: *This offense was not looking like it did in the first two games, but you guys were still able to put up 80 points. What does it say about this team and the depth they have on offense?***

**SJJ:** We have our offensive guys, but most nights, we rely on our defense. If we come out and play defense, the offense upside will figure it out. But we’ve got to get in transition and get our points there.”

**Q: *Talk about the defense’s role in the second half, holding them to 22 points and under 30 percent shooting. What has changed on that end of the floor defensively, and what was the discussion in the locker room?***

**SJJ:** “We just realized how we were playing. We weren’t grinding or finishing, and we didn’t have more deflections than them coming out of halftime. We knew if we didn’t have that, then we weren’t playing our type of basketball. After we figured that out, we got straight to it.”

**Q: *Was there a weird feeling to the first half of the game with Josh not taking a shot for eight minutes and Cameron not drawing a foul for nine minutes?***

**SJJ:** “It’s basketball and not everything goes our way every night, but we stuck with it and still believed in the other guys we had around to get the job done when they could.”