

## **2024-25 Mississippi State Men's Basketball Postgame Quotes**

### **Mississippi State vs. West Georgia – November 4, 2024**

#### **Mississippi State Head Coach Chris Jans**

***Q: Obviously, the rebounding got better in the second half. What was your message to the guys after they got out-rebounded in the second half?***

**CJ:** "It was a big topic of conversation at halftime as you can imagine. I've been harping on rebounding, especially for the last two weeks heading into the game-portion of the schedule. We need a mentality that it's going to be different. We've got to match physicality. We're going to have to rebound by committee, and everybody is going to have to help."

"Whether it's checking down if you're a guard or checking someone, everyone's got to be involved. We obviously haven't prepared very well for that. To have one offensive rebound at halftime and to have given up the offensive rebounds that we did, it got a little bit better in the second half, but I don't know if it could've gotten much worse. It's something that will definitely get addressed when we get back to the floor."

***Q: What are some early thoughts on what Claudell Harris Jr. was able to do tonight?***

**CJ:** "He had a great night. He can really get it going, gets it off quick. He's got a beautiful stroke and lots of confidence. I leaned to the coaches in the second half and said, 'The guys that are in shape are playing the best tonight.' You can look at the box scores to see who that was. They were the guys that won the sprints and dug in a little bit more. It shows up on gameday because those guys played really well tonight. You can see it in their body language. Some guys were gassed more than others, which is typical for an opening game. I told them before the game that they're in great practice shape, but game shape is different."

***Q: You had 17 steals and 31 points off turnovers. Were you pleased with how active you were defensively?***

**CJ:** "For the most part without watching all the film. I talked to the other guys about how we're going to have to be. We just don't have that rim protection or the girth in-front of the basket. We have to be good out front with our tenacity, our positioning and our hands to overcome that lack of size. Turnovers have to be a big part of what we do. We're trying to be more handsy and aggressive and that showed tonight."

***Q: We've only seen one performance, but you've seen Claudell Harris Jr. and Josh Hubbard work together all summer. What do you think is the ceiling that those two can reach? Could they possibly be one of the better guard duos in the SEC?***

**CJ:** "Oh gosh, that's so far away. They had a great night tonight. Claudell came off the bench and gave us a big spark. I love Claudell Harris. I love what he's about. He made a conscious effort to buy in. You talk to kids about that all the time, but he did it. He decided one day that I'm all in. He's been preparing. Do I expect him to have six three's and 20 points every night? Obviously not. Would I like it? Heck yeah, but those are big expectations."

"I think other guys can do that too. There are other guys that have runs in practice who can shoot the ball. We made 14 three's in a game. I don't think that's happened in my two years here. I'm not saying that's going to happen every night, but it's nice to know that all the recruiting paid off."

***Q: There were a fair number of quick-release shots in the first half especially. It looked like in the second half, guys were making second, third, and fourth passes and still getting the open three-pointers off. Were you pleased with the way they looked for each other and found openings to shoot from?***

CJ: "This group, for the most part, every single day has been very unselfish. Sharing the basketball has been a big positive for us all summer and all fall. We were giddy about it as a staff. They're sharing the ball. That says a lot about their character of them. Hopefully, that will continue. I thought in the second half, we had a couple shots that I thought were just okay. But for the most part, we took a ton of shots, but there are probably only a handful that we'd take back."

***Q: I asked KeShawn Murphy when the last time he led the team in assists was and he couldn't remember when. Can he be that kind of facilitator for you throughout the season?***

CJ: "Absolutely. He's got great vision and good feel. He obviously can see over the defense at times, depending on who's guarding him. Last year with Cam we did a lot of point-forward looks with him. We probably will do that with Murph and see how it goes. He's got a great skillset with length and positional size. We're going to try and take advantage of it."

***Q: KeShawn gets the start tonight, what do you think of his performance?***

CJ: "He started because he deserved to start. He's had as good of an offseason as anyone in our program, from June to today. He's been bringing it every day, and he's got a great approach every day. People that know him personally couldn't be more excited for him. He's had a lot of injuries and mishaps along the way. It's been a rough start to his college career. He's a redshirt junior, but he's not inexperienced."

"I was so happy for him to make the plays that he did. He played a ton of minutes in the first half because of Matthews' foul trouble, which was talked about after the game in a funny way he set himself up. He said, 'Coach, put number one up there for the first win.' So, I did hashtag one and hashtag two. He went what's that for, and I was like that's the number of fouls you get in the first ten minutes of every game we play. It needs to change. But Murph has a lot of talent, and it's nice to see him get it on the floor."

**Forward KeShawn Murphy**

***Q: What was it like getting to start tonight?***

KM: "It's new. There's nothing that I can't adjust to so I can be there for the team. Wherever my team needs me, I'm there."

***Q: We heard leading up to tonight that this team was going to look different offensively and get some more people scoring. How have you seen this offense evolve?***

KM: "We still have a long way to go and are just getting started. We're starting to figure out how to play as a team. I'm just excited to be here because it's different from the previous years."

***Q: You had four assists tonight, leading everybody. When was the last time you led the team in assists?***

KM: "I can't even tell you, and I feel like I had more. When these guys are hot, it makes my job easy. I'm just glad to be on the team with these guys that shoot open shots and are easy to assist."

***Q: You were in the portal for a little while in the off-season and decided to come back here. Getting the start on opening night, you got a really nice hand from the crowd. What was it like to hear all those fans that have stayed behind you the whole time?***

**KM:** "It was a blessing, man. I appreciate all the fans and all the people that supported me, regardless of who you are. You all got me here again, and I'm blessed that I made the decision to come back. I appreciate everyone."

***Q: Despite all the three-pointers a third of your points tonight were scored on defense, points off turnovers. Is that something that coach stressed because even the first basket of the game was created by a turnover?***

**KM:** "I feel like we could have forced more turnovers. We want more, whatever we had was not enough. He always preaches that it could have been more. There's more that we can do – stronger defensive breakdowns, and we could have done a better job. It's never enough."

***Q: I believe 10 players played at least 10 minutes. What's it like playing with so much depth?***

**KM:** "It's a good thing when we can spread the floor and rotate guys in. Everybody gives good minutes. Everybody plays their part. We have guys that have more depth and can score around all five positions. They make our job, and everybody's easier."

**Guard Claudell Harris Jr.**

***Q: You didn't seem too hesitant to shoot tonight, how was your first game tonight as a Bulldog?***

**CHJ:** "It was a great experience. The fans came out, the student section really set the tone for us and gave us a confidence boost. That's why I was able to come out off the bench and trust my work"

***Q: When you came here you already knew that Josh Hubbard was here, and the guy that had the season that he did last year. What was that like with the recruiting process and choosing Mississippi State?***

**CHJ:** "I came here to learn how to be a winner. I knew I could do that under Chris Jans, and that's what's going on. Me and Josh have a great relationship on and off the court as you can see. We talk to each other the whole game. Nights like this when he's hot and I'm hot, it's hard to stop."

***Q: You guys rebounded a little bit better in the second half, I'm sure Coach Jans mentioned that at halftime about the rebound. What was said and what needed to change?***

**CHJ:** "The rebound was the issue in the first half like you said. We came into halftime, and Jans got on us. We had to take self-accountability, be more physical, work on our technicalities, checking out and grabbing the ball with two hands. Just making sure those 50/50 balls are all ours."

***Q: Despite all the three-pointers, a third of your points were on defense from points off turnovers. Even the first basket of the game was created by a turnover.***

**CHJ:** "We always strive for more and more. We came out today, and we know, for myself, it was on defense. We knew we wanted to get up in the lanes and make stuff hard for people to run their offense. It was good but it just wasn't enough."

***Q: When you and Josh are hot like that, not a lot of teams can stop you. Just talk about what you both are able to do tonight.***

**CHJ:** "It's a blessing to be able to play with these guys, they are also talented. I see them day in and day out and how they work, and I really came in here ready to play my role. I keep my intentions pure. I trust my work, their work and the coaches. So, it just all works out."