

## 2025-26 Mississippi State Men's Basketball Postgame Quotes Mississippi State vs. Tennessee – February 11, 2026

**State Head Coach Chris Jans**

***Q: You talked earlier this week about being concerned about Tennessee's physicality and rebounding. How much did that contribute to their win tonight?***

**CJ:** "It was the biggest reason why we dug ourselves a hole along with how we started the game defensively from not being assignment correct on the game plan that we had installed. Our ball screen coverage was nothing that we haven't done in the past. It was pretty simple trying to keep the ball and the roller in front."

"It's easy for me to say it, but we've done that before and had some success in it. We didn't early, and we were all over the board. We just weren't in the right spots with the right coverage and with the right angles. They took full advantage of it. I mean, they were dunking the ball in our goal four or five times in the first five or six minutes. I don't have the numbers, but I'd imagine that's pretty close. That was very frustrating. We just weren't in the right spot."

"So, that gives the other team a lot of confidence, not that they needed any. It makes the bench feel good, and it makes the coaches feel good. The only reason why we were in the game, I think it was 27-25. Obviously, Josh [Hubbard] had gotten off to a terrific start. I will give our other guys credit on the other end for understanding that. For the most part, they knew what was going on. Certainly, we were trying to run things for him to get him looks which isn't that unusual for us, but he just had a bounce to his step tonight. He kept us in the game, and I don't mean that it was just Josh that just kept us in the game because of what I just talked about. The other guys were doing their part. Then, we just had that stretch where they ran a 7-0 run or something like that, and it got some separation there going into halftime."

***Q: Your team played well in portions during each half. What causes your team to be streaky like that?***

**CJ:** "Yeah, if I could fix that, we'd be in a better mood. It's frustrating a little bit. Certainly, nobody plays their best all the time. That's the goal, you always want more. You're always pushing and prodding and scratching and clawing to try to get your team to play at the maximum that they're capable of. But we all understand that it doesn't work all the time. Unfortunately, we certainly have been inconsistent."

"That run that we had there in the second half to at least have the other team call a timeout or two and start getting a little nervous about the lead dissipating the way it did. But that can't be why we play a little bit harder. It's got to be from the jump, and it's got to be from the get-go. It's got to be all the time. For whatever reason, I haven't been able to push the right buttons to get them to play like that all the time."

***Q: We talked about the 18-0 run midway through the second half, can you talk about taking whatever momentum that can be on the road Saturday to Ole Miss?***

**CJ:** "Yeah, I'm sure it'll get discussed tomorrow, but that isn't necessarily going to help us win the game. It's going to have a little bearing on Saturday's outcome. Right now, I'm not thinking about it too much. I'm sure here shortly that my mind will switch over to preparing for our next game which happens to be on the road at Ole Miss."

“Certainly, looking at from a rivalry standpoint, we dug ourselves a hole by losing at home by one. That didn't sit well with us, but we get another crack to try to even the score, if you will. I'm sure by tomorrow morning that we'll be ready to attack that.”

**Guards Jayden Epps and Josh Hubbard**

***Q: How did you see this team fight back after being down by 23 midway in the second half?***

**JH:** “Yeah, we know what we had to do going into this game. We knew it wasn't going to be easy, a very physical game. That stretch where we did come back to get within five, we were very physical. They didn't get a bunch of offensive rebounds, and we were great on the offensive end. With that, you can create momentum and get back in the game.”

***Q: How do you feel Tennessee's defense created problems tonight?***

**JE:** “I feel like going into it we had a good game plan. They were in the gaps heavy on us and making it hard to get in the lane. I feel like we just have to go back to the drawing board and see how we can improve next game and get better shots on offense, get better movement and get in a rhythm.”

***Q: What do you think you guys are doing differently when the team is playing well like it did during that stretch in the second half?***

**JH:** “I think we're a heck of a transition team and can create easier buckets for everybody by playing fast. By playing off the defense, getting steals, getting the gaps, the rebounds, and pushing it for sure.”

***Q: What were you guys feeling when you guys where on that run to get back in the game?***

**JE:** “Yeah, we got a little bit of momentum, and we just tried to keep it. We just have to learn how to put together a 40-minute game like that. If not 40 minutes, at least 35. We have to figure out a way to put together a whole game and fight and scratch, and claw the whole game, so that we can maybe win some of these games that we've got left.”

***Q: You tied the career record for three-pointers at Mississippi State, how does it feel to be in that spot right now?***

**JH:** “Man, it's a blessing for sure. I wasn't even focused on it before the game, but it's definitely a blessing to be in that conversation.”

***Q: You guys are struggling at home but have more success on the road. Talk about going to Ole Miss on Saturday in a rivalry game.***

**JE:** “I feel like it's a good opportunity for us. I feel like we're ready to play them. I feel like and Coach [Jans] may have told you all this, but any day we play anybody I feel like we can win. We just have to have the right mindset, and the right approach going on the road. Like you said, we've been good on the road. So, I feel like we have a good opportunity coming up. It's a must win game for us.”