

## 2025-26 Mississippi State Men's Basketball Postgame Quotes Mississippi State at Ole Miss – February 14, 2026

### State Head Coach Chris Jans

#### ***Q: How did it feel to have the strong end to the first half after struggles in previous games?***

**CJ:** “You see different coaches, and I've been around it a little bit in the past where they break it down to media timeout games. And even, some of them keep score of how many media games they win; four-minute games plus some change. That wasn't my plan mentally. After we started the way we did, I went down that train, and we talked about it. We won the first round, and that's over. Now, we've got to do the same type of things to get a win in the second round.”

“It worked for us for a while. I told them at halftime, I mean, we went four out of five. If we come out of halftime and win that round, we're going to be in great shape. Unfortunately, we didn't. We had to call a time out pretty shortly thereafter. They were ready to go. You watch us play. I know it's my responsibility. It's still frustrating to me, but I thought they played a little harder today. I thought they guarded the ball with a little more resistance today. I thought they flew around a little bit more, especially in the first 20 minutes, the first 30 minutes of the game in the end. Obviously, it just kind of got sketchy. You're just trying to get to the finish line unfortunately, but I felt like our guys had had a different edge to them tonight for some reason.”

#### ***Q: What was your opinion on how the team played with ball-screens and pick-and-roll defense, and how the team looked bought in?***

**CJ:** “After the Tennessee debacle of our ball screen defense in the first 25 minutes of the game, it was something that we addressed and worked on and showed film on and talked about. So, yes, I like the response that they had specifically to that, and guarding the ball.”

“Like I've already addressed, we even got to the point where we were adjusting in the game because they started to get behind us again, and dunking the ball in the goal, and Coach likes that. It's too easy, and we started switching.”

“Again, with Jamar like you and I talked pregame having a luxury of someone that can play the ball screens in every different way, is a big advantage. We were able to use that tonight, and it kind of settled us down on the defensive end.”

#### ***Q: Would you say this was the best offensive performance as a team in conference play?***

**CJ:** “Yeah, without looking at the tape. I mean, 47 and 43. Obviously, a big reason why is, Josh was ultra efficient. Maybe the most efficient that he's had since he became a Bulldog. I'm so happy for him. I'm just elated for him. You and I have talked about it. He's never had a game like this against Ole Miss, and he's from the Sip. So, it's important maybe a little more important to him, and Jamar and Ja'Borri, and those kinds of guys. He doesn't really get wrapped up in that. He treats this game like he treats every other game, at least outwardly, but I know he's got to feel pretty good coming up here tonight and playing the way he did.”

#### ***Q: How did it feel to have different players step up at different moments when you needed them during tonight's game?***

**CJ:** “Well, our shooting splits, 57 percent on the road. Usually, you're going to win that way. We went 11-for-24 from three. But like you mentioned, Achor, hitting those three's early in the first half just has to make his confidence shoot through the roof.”

"I thought Shawn Jones Jr., other than the foul trouble, was impacting the game without the stat sheet. He had eight defensive rebounds, and he was going up and getting them. Three assists, zero turnovers. He only took two shots, but he made a three, obviously late in the shot clock. I just felt like when he was out there, and we had a little more bite and edge to us. This was important to him, and this game was really, really important to him."

***Q: How important is it to have guards be able to rebound well in a game?***

**CJ:** "It helps a lot, and it takes a lot of pressure off the bigs. When we played them in our place, obviously, we weren't happy about the results, but I think that's when [Ja'Borri] McGhee had seven defensive rebounds."

"Then, [Jayden] Epps comes out tonight and finds a way to impact the game when he was struggling shooting the basketball. He struggled, especially in the first half. I was so glad he knocked that three down in front of our bench. The whole bench erupted. Hopefully, he'll get to shake that off, but three assists, one turnover, and he was defending out there. So, we talked about that a lot as coaches. Say, hey, when the ball doesn't go in, don't let it affect the rest of your game. You've got to continue to do everything else to try to help move the needle in the right direction. I thought he did that tonight."

***Q: Why do you think you have had so much success against Ole Miss?***

**CJ:** "I'm not sure, but I'm glad that it's that way. I've always been that way for some reason. It's not trying to pat in the back, I promise, but I've always fared well in rivalry games even at New Mexico State. So, I wish I knew what it was, but I don't. They talked about in the main media room, and I just said that we prepared for this game like every other game. It's the Super Bowl. Certainly, we know how important it is to our fan base, our administration and our players. I think once you go through it even the new guys. They understand the second time how important it is certainly, internally. I didn't talk about with the team, but we've been very successful against them. We were really disappointed in the one point loss at home, and, didn't want to have the S word [sweep] come out, didn't want to be a part of that. That was pretty internally motivating for me, and I'm just glad that we were able to get it done today."