

## 2025-26 Mississippi State Men's Basketball Postgame Quotes Mississippi State vs. Missouri – February 28, 2026

### State Head Coach Chris Jans

***Q: I asked Josh Hubbard the same question. This is the second game in a row where your team has been down by 30 points at halftime, is that something you can kind of sense in warmups?***

**CJ:** “I don’t know what Josh said, but I didn’t sense it. We had a great day yesterday at practice. I thought they were really, really good considering what we had in the last outing, and where we are in the season. Their energy in practice was really good. We had a very short shootaround this morning because of the early start time. We had to modify what we normally do for gameday preparation, but they were enthusiastic and had a bounce to their step. For whatever reason, we got off to just a horrible start again, and we just played uphill all afternoon.”

***Q: Four straight games where the defense has given up at least 85 points, where are the issues on defense in your mind?***

**CJ:** “Yeah, it’s tough to even hear that. Certainly, I’m aware of it. It’s what I told them in the locker room that one of my job responsibilities 1A, 1B, 1C is on gameday to get our guys, and our team to compete at the highest level regardless of what our record is, who we are playing, what time the tip is, where the game is played at or who’s available or unavailable.”

“That’s part of my job, and it means a lot to me. I told them for whatever reason that I’ve failed to be able to for the most part of the games to get them to play to the standard that we’ve created and to the expectation that our fans have come to know that we have. In the end, it’s one of my major responsibilities, and it’s not happening. So, that obviously hurts me to my core and what we believe in. We’ve just not been able to get them to play at the level that we need them to.”

***Q: On gamedays, do you think the team’s issues are more effort or more execution?***

**CJ:** “It’s definitely a combination of both, but the thing that I focused on today with them was the effort part. As a group and as a program, certainly you can point out a play here, a play there, or a run or a two-minute stretch here or there, that they played with the required effort and tenacity that you need to compete at the level we’re competing at in this league.”

“We’re just not doing it right now. We’ve done it at times. We’ve done it for games. We’ve done it for stretches, but it hasn’t been something that’s in our back pocket. It’s not something that we can rely on, and you always want more. I’ve had teams where I look back going, yeah, I thought that they didn’t compete enough. At times, you compare it to different stretches where you’re like, okay that wasn’t that bad. But certainly, it’s a combination of both.”

***Q: Following up the Auburn game with three straight losses, are you feeling frustrated with the team’s performances for you as a coach?***

**CJ:** “Yeah, it feels like it was forever ago. It feels like forever ago when we had the Ole Miss win on the road. And then came home, had that game against Auburn. It felt like ‘Wow, we got some momentum. We’re going to go to South Carolina and keep this thing going and play our best basketball down the stretch, which is what every coach across the country is talking about. That’s always the goal to be able to do that, regardless of where you’re at. You want to playing your best right now. Right now is when you want to start to be peaking as a basketball team, and certainly we’re not.”

“So, it's more than frustrating. Whatever word is worse than frustrating, insert that word for me. I'm sure, and I know they're [the players] are frustrated too. They don't like it. Like I said, it's my responsibility to try to fix it and change it. I'm just not doing a good enough job.”

***Q: What did you see from King Grace today and how he played through an injury with nine points and zero turnovers today?***

**CJ:** “I wasn't sure if he was going to play. He's been bothered by a groin issue the last few days, but he was on the available list, and he said he was good. So, I thought he was hesitant in his first run and trying to feel it out a little bit.”

“Then, I'm not sure and I'll have to ask him, but something clicked mentally for him, because all of the sudden, he just started playing really aggressively and with a lot of confidence. I obviously loved the result. More positive plays for him individually than negative. Obviously, it's in a losing cause. But for him, individually hopefully, this is something that he can build on going forward as a young player. Knowing how he has to be of his mindset all the time, because of that mindset that he had, not just on the offensive end, but also on the defensive end. He was being really aggressive and playing the type of defense that he's capable of playing. [T.O.] Barrett was giving us all sorts of problems. It was too little, too late, but he did a pretty good job on him down the stretch.”

**Guards Josh Hubbard and King Grace**

***Q: It's the second straight game this team has been down by 30 at halftime, is that something you sense during warmups?***

**JH:** “I wouldn't say necessarily warmups. I would push it for more to the start of the game. When we get punched, responding quicker, playing hard and things like that. So, that's exactly what I think has been going on in the past two games. Just it's right at tipoff, it's got to be from the get-go.”

***Q: King, you've played well the last two games. Tell me what's been working for you and how much more comfortable are you out there right now?***

**KG:** “I would say just taking my time and letting it come to me working for me. Just being hard and aggressive on defense and letting the offense come to me just continues to work out and just trusting my teammates.”

***Q: As a leader in the locker room, what do you say to your team when you are down like that at halftime?***

**JH:** “Yeah, just continue to play hard regardless of the score. Not just settling and not just giving up so easily. Basically, just staying positive as much as we can.”

***Q: What is it going to take to pull out a win over the last two regular season games?***

**KG:** “I think it'll take a whole group effort. Everybody buying in and wanting to compete and wanting to play hard for each other and win together.”

***Q: Josh, talk about what it means to you to win the Coach Wooden Citizenship Cup award and what it means to you to get presented with the trophy today?***

**JH:** “It's a blessing for sure. I didn't know they were presenting it to me until yesterday. It was a cool experience for me and for many family. I'm so blessed to receive an award like that.”