

2025-26 Mississippi State Men's Basketball Postgame Quotes

Mississippi State vs. Ole Miss – January 17, 2026

Mississippi State Head Coach Chris Jans

Q: What were your thoughts on tonight's game after having a double-digit lead in the first half for the third straight game with a loss at the end. What contributed to Josh Hubbard and Jayden Epps off shooting nights?

CJ: "Yeah, tonight's game unfolded much differently than the two previous games that you talked about. I didn't think our guys in those two games [Kentucky and Alabama] handled the runs by the other teams that we've already talked about, but I thought tonight they handled it a lot better. They stood their ground and even found themselves down by four pretty late in the game and stayed together. We got the stops that we needed. We just couldn't find a way to put the ball through the goal on the last couple of possessions. I didn't think, from where I sat, it was a completely different feel in our huddles compared to maybe some of our huddles in the previous two games."

"In terms of Epps and Hubbard, yeah, they didn't have an efficient night. They just didn't. They didn't shoot the ball the way they're capable of. Everyone that's been following us knows that they're a big part of us scoring the basketball."

Q: What do you take away from the last two opportunities to get a chance to take the lead and win the game?

CJ: "Listen, all that matters is who won or who lost. I understand that. We're going to continue to talk about the game and rightfully so, but the situational part of the game – you get to the end, and it's magnified because the time runs out. Like you said, I wouldn't change any of it with what we did, even going back to [Josh] Hubbard's three and how we generated that. Then, getting to the line. Then, getting to the cup. Again, with the right player. I'll take that scenario, 100 out of 100 [times]. I'll take that scenario in that type of game where the score was, time remaining, et cetera, 100 out of 100 [times]. Just for whatever reason, they didn't decide to let the ball go through the net."

Q: Can you talk about the atmosphere and all the festivities leading up to the game?

CJ: "We expected that [a good crowd and atmosphere], don't take that the wrong way. It's what it has been every time. It's the rivalry game, and I think that both coaches would've said the same thing. I just hate the fact that they're having to leave after this game. It means so much to many people around here, and to not feel that winning feeling that we've had in these games at least at home since we've gotten here. This is a different feeling for all of us to walk out here tonight."

"Certainly, with alumni weekend, we had a lot of former players back. I got to meet a lot of former Bulldogs. They had some events and, time permitting, I got to be a small part in it both yesterday and today. That part was fun. That part was cool to hear these guys talk about their experiences and their stories, I'm sure they were embellished a little bit as you get a little bit older, but that part of the weekend was very cool. Certainly, the '96 team, I think all but one or two players were here for that, and I know Coach Williams was super excited about that. I don't get to be a part of that with what happens in the game [during halftime], but hopefully that was well received too."

Q: Jamarion Davis-Fleming played one of his best games tonight, what do you think contributed to his performance?

CJ: "I thought that Jamar was really, really good. He was dynamic, quick twitched and he was all over the court. He stuffed the stat sheet tonight with the blocked shots, the offensive rebounds and the way he was moving around on defense."

“Again, of the top of my head, I can’t imagine at least in an impactful game like this that it was not his best game to date. With his development and with his future, it’s something that we’ll be talking about later.”

Guard Jayden Epps and Forward Jamarion Davis-Fleming

Q: What’s changed in the game after you guys had a double-digit lead in the first half?

JE: “Coach [Jans] has been stressing it to us a lot and telling us we’ve been getting off to great starts. If you remember at the beginning of the season, we were not getting off to great starts and finishing better. Coach has been stressing that we have got to try to figure out a way to put together 40 minutes and put together a whole game where we can be able to fight, and we can sustain leads. That’s just something that we’ve got to work on. We’ve got to go back to the drawing board and figure it out.”

Q: What was working for you tonight?

JDF: “Just doing the dirty work. Being aggressive and trying to get offensive rebounds and defensive rebounds, off dashes or cuts. I’m just trying to score and do whatever I’ve got to do to make the team win. I just try to be ultra-aggressive, not trying to be so passive and trusting my work.”

Q: What were you guys talking about with coach in the huddles to try and get something going down the stretch offensively?

JE: “He just told us to keep playing and keep trusting in ourselves. Our teammates kept trusting in us. Don’t put your heads down, the ball doesn’t go in every night. He told us to hang our hat on defense. Try to get stops and just keep playing. Like I said, the ball doesn’t go in every night. We just tried to find ways to win. It didn’t go our way tonight, next time maybe it will.”

Q: Being a Mississippi kid, what was it like playing in this rivalry?

JDF: “It was extremely fun having a packed house and feeling the energy. Just how much it means to the city of Starkville and Mississippi State. It was fun to play in especially in my freshman year. I wish we could’ve gotten the win, but it was very fun playing in it.”

Q: What’s the biggest step you’ve taken in your freshman year to be able to have the kind of night that you had?

JDF: “Just trusting Coach Jans. He puts me in the best position to do what I have to do. Just step in my role and not step outside my role by not doing too much or too little. Just having athletic plays, blocking shots, rebounding, dunks and doing what I can do to help the team to win. I’m just trying to not overplay my part.”