

## 2025-26 Mississippi State Men's Basketball Postgame Quotes Mississippi State vs. No. 15 Vanderbilt – January 24, 2026

### Mississippi State Head Coach Chris Jans

***Q: Did it surprise you that your guys never matched the intensity of Vanderbilt especially at the start of the game?***

**CJ:** "It surprised me. Both teams were on the wrong side of a streak, and we talked a lot about that in the last 48 hours. One team was going to feel better after the results of today and get off the snide if you will."

"Like you mentioned, they brought great intensity to the start of the game. I'm not sure if our guys thought that we'd get off to a good start because that's been kind of the norm for the most part in SEC play and even prior to that for a few games. We didn't have the right mental approach or certainly the physicality, the intensity, or the attention to detail that we know we've got to play with all the time, but especially out the gate. I don't know if we took it for granted or not."

"It's like what I told them after the game. They've all played enough basketball to know that when you look back at each game, there's usually a theme or a handful of plays or an area or two that determine the outcome of the game. Every once in a while, you can punch someone in the face two or three times so hard that they don't get off the mat. I felt like that's what happened to us. After the first 10 or 12 minutes, we didn't find a group of guys that decided that we were going to dust ourselves and punch back harder and more. Unfortunately, it ended up being that way for the majority of the game."

***Q: Could you sense that the game was going to be bad from practices leading into the game?***

**CJ:** "Considering the circumstances, they were great. We got home late Wednesday. Then, obviously we had to move the tip time up for potential weather. So, our routine was a little off. Vanderbilt had played Tuesday, so their routine wasn't thrown quite as off as ours."

"What I told the locker room is all of that you're going to hear that as an excuse out there, and that had nothing to do with the outcome of this game. It had zero [effect], and I said that because we got the information to them like we always do or try to do anyways."

"I felt like, in our PM shootaround last night and in our morning film today and in warmups from the feedback I get from the guys that are out there. They're all like yeah, the vibe is really good, and I felt that way too. Our practice yesterday was really good. It was intense. We guarded, we rebounded and we played how we were trying to play. So, it's no, a long answer to your question. It's not something that I expected, nor did I get a feeling that it could be a long day for us. That wasn't the case."

***Q: How important is it to have strong player leadership in tough moments like this?***

**CJ:** "Well, we're going to find out. We're pretty deep into a tough, wrong side of the streak. We're going to need a lot of that right now from players and from myself, it starts there and ends there, and from our staff. We've got to go on the road now this week. I don't care who you're playing, where you're playing, when you're playing, home, road, neutral. In this league, you're going to play a prepared team with really good players and a plan. Your point is well taken. We're going to have to figure out a way to stay together and coach better and compete more. That was again the most disappointing thing for me for whatever reason."

"We did a decent job on the glass in the first half, and it's something that we've really been talking about lately. In the second half, Jamar [Jamarion Davis-Fleming] had two offensive rebounds. That was the only individual that recorded an offensive rebound, and that can't happen when you're trying to get back in the game. You've got to have more guys that are hungry for the ball, and I'm not doing a good enough job to get them to play with that motor that's required to do all the things that we want them to do."

"We talked about guarding the ball a lot going into this game, and we had a heck of a time keeping [Tyler] Tanner and [Duke] Miles out of the paint. They're obviously really good players, and you've got to give them a lot of credit. I just didn't feel like we were motored up quite enough that would be needed to play against those kind of players."

**Mississippi State Guard Josh Hubbard and Guard Jayden Epps**

***Q: Your team has got off to good starts throughout the season, what do you think went differently during today's game?***

**JH:** "Yeah, they started off hot. They had a good game plan against us defensively and offensively. We kind of talked about how it's like a fight when we go into games. First round, they kind of got us bloody a little bit. So, they went on that run and after that we were just trying to crawl out the hole."

***Q: During a game like this when they're tough moments, what are you all saying to each other?***

**JE:** "We just try to look each other up and try to get each other to have some energy and play with some enthusiasm. Because at the end of the day, that's what we've got to do. When we get down like Hubb [Josh Hubbard] said, we've got to learn how to find a way to get back up. So, we're just going to keep fighting. Like, we're going to be down again this year. We're going to have to fight back. So, that's something that we're going to have to be better at, and we're going to keep working at it."

***Q: Where do you assess the team's confidence after the last couple of weeks?***

**JH:** "Yeah, I mean we're all competitive. We don't like to lose, but we never let that change our approach to practice or the next game. We lift each other up, and we get to the next game. We practice hard still. I mean, yeah, it's frustrating to lose the games because you know we're all competitive. It's the SEC, nobody wants to lose. But with saying all that, we just want to get to the next game."

***Q: Where do you feel the process starts to get better and to turn this around?***

**JE:** "I feel like just continuing to do what we're doing. Like Coach [Jans] said, I don't know if he's been telling you guys, but I feel like we've been practicing well. It hasn't been translating on the court for us lately, but it's basketball. I've been in college for a long time, Hubb [Josh Hubbard] has too. I've lost a lot of games, and I always know that it can turn around. So, I just feel like we keep doing day to day, being intentional, keep lifting each other up and just keep being [good] teammates and staying together. I feel like we'll definitely turn it around."

***Q: What did Vanderbilt do defensively that gave you guys some trouble?***

**JH:** "They were very handsy on the ball. Off the ball, they were very aggressive as well. They're making every catch and every pass tough. They did a tremendous job in ball screen defense as well. We had to make quick decisions. With all that combined, they just made the court shrink a little bit."