

2025-26 Mississippi State Men's Basketball Postgame Quotes Mississippi State at No. 5 Florida – March 3, 2026

State Head Coach Chris Jans

Q: Your team was able to throw a punch in the first 10 minutes of the game. What was working for your team when things were going well?

CJ: “Like you said, we talked pregame about the poor starts that we’ve had recently, and that was a big focus going into this game on the road. It’s obviously a very good basketball team playing their best right now. They’ve won 10 in a row, something like that. They’ve won the league.”

“We threw a punch, and it landed. Our guys were ready to play. We really talked a lot last night and today about having to get off to a good start, especially when they had a sold out arena and the celebration that they had before the game. I was excited. I was excited with the way that we were playing and with the way we were defending. We were battling around the basket. I don’t have all the information in front of me, but I know it was at least a 14-0 run ... Unfortunately, they turned the tide. There, at the end of the half, I thought maybe we could close the gap to get it to single digits. We had a two-for-one opportunity, and we didn’t convert. Then, in the second half, it obviously got out of hand.”

Q: How hard is it to defend against Florida when they have so many guys to account for?

CJ: “They’re a good basketball team, and it’s a heck of a program. They’re gearing up in their eyes to make another great run, and we knew it was going to be a challenge. Our theme was, what a great challenge, but what an opportunity. But again, we got whipped. The final score was the final score. I’m not happy about the results, and I’m not happy how it got away from us. But at the end of the day, I thought our kids battled and had a good mindset. They played together, and tried to figure out a way to stay in the game as long as they could. Unfortunately, that just wasn’t meant to be.”

Q: How tough is it to go in and rebound when you’re dealing against that kind of size?

CJ: “Well, obviously, it’s the first and the foremost thing that you’re talking about when you’re getting ready to prepare and play a team like Florida that just relies on it. It’s a big part of their program. It’s a big part of their success. Certainly, we were outsized at different points and at different positions in the game.”

“I thought we were battling them early, but we had too many possessions. Certainly, this is something you have to really watch the film about. But, from the naked eye with too many possessions where we had too many of our individual guys assuming that a teammate was about to get a rebound. It even looked like, and I get it that it looked like they were about to get the rebound. Then, Florida would tip it, or one of our guys would tip it. We had too many guys that were running to the other end as opposed to lurking in the paint. We really talked a lot about before the game about all five guys – a couple of those guards don’t crash and all five had to be in the paint. What we call ‘pick up the trash’, the loose balls that squirt away. When you play them, there’s going to be a lot of that. There’s going to be tip balls, and there’s going to be scrums.”

“I felt there were just too many possessions where I’d look up, and it wasn’t just one guy. We just had one possession where it was this person. Then, one possession where it was these two [people]. We had too many guys that were leaking out and not running to the fight. Against a Florida team like that, if you keep doing that over the course of 40 minutes, you’re going to get crushed on the glass. As the game got into the last 10 minutes, that’s what happened.”

Q: You have one more opportunity left defend your home floor. Talk about another great opportunity for you team against Georgia on Saturday?

CJ: “Fortunately, it’s Tuesday. So, we’ll be able to have a day to reset. I hate people saying that word because I’ve had to say it too many times throughout the course of this season. I don’t want to be in this position. I can’t stand being in this position, but here we are. We don’t have a choice right now. That’s the only choice that we have is to figure out a way to get these guys off the mat. By Thursday when we get going on the court, get them excited to play another SEC game and play our last game at home. We’ll have a bunch of guys that we’ll honor before we head to Nashville for the SEC Tournament.”