

2025-26 Mississippi State Men's Basketball Postgame Quotes State vs. Georgia – March 7, 2026

State Head Coach Chris Jans

Q: What went wrong in the second half after having the lead going into halftime?

CJ: “Well, they made 17 three’s for the game, eight in the first half and nine in the second half. We had back-to-back halves with eight turnovers. Turnovers have become a bigger issue for us the last four or five games than it was prior. It’s just hard to beat good teams when you’re not getting a shot on goal and giving them multiple opportunities.”

“They did what they’ve been doing this year. There are turning people over. They’re pressing, and they’re playing up and down. They’re really high on three and rim rate. That’s what happens when you get to the rim usually you get to the [free throw] line a little more often than the other team. They shot a lot of three’s, and they made way too high of a percentage on them. So, those were the factors that I thought played a huge part in the outcome of the game.”

Q: What do you think gave Georgia the edge in the final minutes of this game?

CJ: “It’s something that we talked about before the game. The biggest messaging that we had was when it’s senior day, it’s different. Your routine is different, and the [pregame] itinerary is different ... The things that we talked about towards the end were trying to give this group of men that are close to expiring their eligibility a good memory of their last home game.”

“That’s what we talked about. They all had all families here, some more than others. We talked about that, and that they’re all watching you. Let them feel really proud of you, not that they’re not going to win or lose, but with your compete level. That’s what we focused on was that we tried to make a memory of their last game, which obviously we didn’t do. It was very disappointing this way.”

“I did feel like for the most part that the compete level was pretty good. We certainly made mistakes. We talked about turnovers. We were down 6-1 in offensive rebounding at halftime, but we did a much better job in the second half to try and almost even that. I thought the compete level was not why we didn’t win the game which for me that’s the standard that we have. That’s something that at times for different games where it wasn’t at the level we’re used to. That’s been disappointing, but I didn’t think that was the case today.”

Q: What has this group of seniors brought to the table for your team?

CJ: “They’ve all been good in terms of being a part of the program and trying to insert themselves into the fabric of Mississippi State basketball. Certainly, in the era that we’re coaching in now, it’s just different. We had six seniors, but five of them were first year guys. Shawn Jones [Jr.] is a unicorn right now. He’s a four-year player and kept coming back which every year now that every player does for the most part now they have a choice if they want to return or not. It’s reciprocal at times now. Shawn has stuck with us, and we stuck with him. I’m really proud of him that he played today. He hadn’t practiced since he got hurt. He hasn’t practiced at all, and he didn’t even do a shootaround today. He had to do a lot of things with our trainers and our doctors to get him in a position just to play ... I’m proud of him for that. It would’ve been easy for him to duck out because he has a real injury. He did it for the team, for the program and certainly for himself ... It was nice to have him with his length and his activity. I’m glad he was able to play on his senior night. It would’ve been a sad deal [if he didn’t].”

Do you feel like you can take any momentum or progress into the SEC Tournament?

CJ: "I mean at this point, I don't look at it as progress. Five or six games ago, we would still be talking about that. At this point with 31 games under our belt now, it's either win or not. We don't have 6-to-8 games left that we know we're going to play. Hopefully, the platform and the lights, we talked a lot about that already. It's (the SEC Tournament) as close to playing in the NCAA Tournament as I've ever been. I've certainly been to the NCAA Tournament a lot as an assistant and as a head coach. The SEC Tournament, my first year I remember thinking, 'Wow, it's really really close to how it feels' with the bright lights and the platform and what's going on around it. So, we're going to treat it that way as well."

Guards Josh Hubbard and Ja'Borri McGhee

Q: Josh, I know you went through a little of this last year. Did the thought cross your mind that today might be your last game at Humphrey Coliseum?

JH: "Not at all. I was so just focused on building momentum into the SEC tournament. Trying to create momentum for next week and getting a feel good in us before we go to Nashville."

Q: Ja'Borri, how did it feel hitting those first couple of three's early?

JM: "It felt great. But, as the time was winding down, I kind of didn't want it to ever end. I was looking forward to this all week, but it's basketball and it happens. I feel like I had fun with the team, and I don't really look at Senior Night as a special moment. There are other things that we're more focused about right now."

Q: Georgia scored 102 points today, what do you think were some of the issues for the team defensively?

JH: "They're a very fast team. I think we didn't communicate as well before in the first half. They were getting quick transition points, quick three's, quick layups and things like that. As we adjusted to that, they hit some big three's in the second half. With all that combined, it was hard to stop for sure."

Q: Josh, what do you think went well today in terms of your individual performance?

JH: "Got in the lane. We all started aggressive in the first half of getting two feet in the paint and things like that. That opened the floor and get a few three's up as well."

Q: What are some things you need to work on specifically entering the SEC Tournament?

JH: "Just enjoying the moment. Coach Jans spoke a little bit about it [in the locker room], Nashville and that environment, just in general is very fun. It's a great opportunity for anybody that gets to experience that. Obviously, you want to play hard, and you want to play your best in the SEC Tournament. Try to get a few wins. At this point, we're trying to win the whole thing. We've got nothing to lose."

Q: With the game being competitive down to the end, do you guys feel like you took some sort of step forward today even if you took a loss?

JM: "Most definitely. I feel like, we as men on and off the court, we know how hard we need to fight in situations. I feel like sometimes that we didn't hold up to the challenge with the opportunities that we had. We've got another one, and hopefully we can turn it around with what's coming."

Q: What do you need to do to build off this offensive performance moving forward?

JM: "I think just mentally that we need to trust each other more inside our rotations with whatever the game plan that Coach Jans gives us. Whether we like it or not, we've got to figure out a way to

play for the name on the front of the jersey and for the name on back of the jersey and for each other.