

2025-26 Mississippi State Men's Basketball Postgame Radio Interview
Mississippi State vs. No. 16 Iowa State – November 10, 2025

Mississippi State Head Coach Chris Jans

Q: Iowa State showed up in a big way on the defensive end tonight, how did they perform so well?

CJ: "They're as good as advertised. I just told our team when we scheduled this game last year, I knew it was going to be quite the challenge. I know their program, I know their coaches and I watch them play a lot. They're a team that I pay attention to, even though we don't play them, obviously in our league, but even in non-conference since I've been here."

"They're a really good basketball team. They dictate, and that's their deal. They're going to be very aggressive at the point of attack with the ball, with a ball screen or without a ball screen. They just try to old-fashioned take the ball from you. They're built on that. That's what they talk about on day one from arrival, leading up to each game. Obviously, it's been a successful formula for Coach Otselberger and their staff with the success they've had in the NCAA Tournament."

"Again, wrapping up this long answer, it's like what I just told the team. We've got a long, long season ahead of us. We can't do anything about the results of this particular game. It was a pretty dejected group of young people in the locker room, including the coaches. At this point, we've got a lot of learning to do. That's really the only thing we can do is learn and grow. Otherwise, it was all for naught. There's no do-overs, and you can't do anything about the result at this point. Obviously, it was a very disappointing result for all of us."

Q: What do you need to see from your team to bounce back from a loss like this?

CJ: "It was 31-27 with four-plus minutes and some change left in the first half. We had a group out there that, I don't know if they were in elite shape. Mentally, they quit on a couple of transition defensive plays. All of the sudden, the feel changed quickly. There were a lot of pivotal plays, but we were battling in that game, going back and forth. We had great energy to start. I thought our offensive rebounding needed to be a huge thing coming into the game, and it was early. In the second half, at least until late, it wasn't much of a factor."

"Obviously, 26 turnovers. I don't remember having a team that had 26 turnovers. I'm not saying that we haven't, I just don't remember it. It was up and down the roster. It was most people that went in the game other than Quincy [Ballard] and Amier [Ali] had at least one turnover, that's a lot. It really added up, and we unfortunately didn't handle their pressure very well."

Q: Did your lack of offense affect how you played transition defense tonight?

CJ: "Unfortunately, that's something that kids and teams do at times. That's certainly not what we want them to do. We try to guard against that with practice and film. Understand that you've got to get to the next play. The next play is the next play regardless of success or lack thereof on the offensive end. You've got to get back and pin your ears back and guard, regardless of how you're playing."

"Like I said, we just didn't do that. At the end of the first half, they started getting in advantage situations offensively, and we had a hard time not getting outnumbered. They had more offensive players in the scoring area than we did. But, guarding turnovers is in my opinion, the hardest thing to guard in basketball. We had a boatload of them tonight."

Q: Were there moments when your team played too quickly and forced themselves into bad situations, rather than Iowa State doing it to them?

CJ: “Absolutely, but again, that’s what they do to people. They speed you up. They put two on the ball quite a bit, and we certainly knew that going into the game. We thought we prepared our guys better than that. But, at the end of the day, it’s what I told them in the locker room. I’m responsible for this program and this team. Certainly, we all have a hand in it, but we’ve got to do a better job preparing them for whoever the opponent is. Like I said earlier, I know this team. I know what they do. I thought we had worked pretty hard in preparation for this game and spent a lot of time, like always, figuring out where to put our guys on the floor. It just wasn’t good enough.”

Q: After a game like this, would you rather have a few days to practice and iron out the mistakes or play another game tomorrow?

CJ: “That’s always an interesting predicament. I would [play a game tomorrow], but we’re playing Saturday. It’s going to be a long flight home. We’ll get home late. We’ve got school tomorrow, and we’ll be off tomorrow [from practice]. But then, we have three days to, like I said earlier, do some reflection, and a lot of learning on the court and in the video room.”

“It eventually goes back to this – college basketball is a marathon. It means so much to so many, and we understand that. We talk about it all the time with our team. The only thing we can do right now is get better from this. We’ve got to learn these lessons and apply them as coaches, and the players have to be receptive. My big thing going into the game is, everybody learns when they lose. I’d rather win and learn, but that’s not an option for us right now. We’ve got to really have growth from this game and what just happened to us.”