

## 2025 Astronaut Jones Cup – Preview

**NOTE:** *The Preview was written at a time prior to recent developments for Team PIA and then amended and submitted before the recent developments for our beloved The Serb...*

Time again for this semi-annual (bi-annual?) regional clash of the Titan (and the other team) known as the Astronaut Jones Cup. The Serb looks so so forward to this event but The Serb does harken on back to what once was a much more competitive era. FORNAROW is no way to live.

For Team USA, FORNAROW is the only way to live. Riding the staunch coattails of the AJC Cup's most storied and celebrated player, TST (4-0), Team USA put "one on the pinky" in 2023 in Tucson. That's FOUR-IN-A-ROW. Six and two overall for Team USA. One-Sided is a term that The Serb might use for it, if The Serb was less prone to hyperbole. Colossal Asskickery is the term The Serb will more likely use. The Serb is proud for the USA, but The Serb and the peoples deserve better. Come on PIA!



Going into AJC #9 in 2025 in Half Moon Bay – the start to a week that includes the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Unfrozen Cavemen – the buzz was around finally suiting up 6 on 6 and making a real thing of this. Riding the UFC wave, it was no problem! (NOTE: The Serb wonders: Is TW5 really in from the 12 spot in the USA Order of Merit and the lowest OWGR player on either roster? And how much Won for Yon did it take?) The only question was of the matches – would we all play or would we see some relegated? As The Serb so aptly predicted, this Wienie POTM governing Selfesteemsville opted to simply add matches and not subject anyone to soul searching from the bench. And heavens for bids, force a captain to be a captain and make a tough decision! The Serb, perhaps like no other, understands growing character, tough love, public humiliation, and personal despair. The Serb suggests a smugish Team USA should be made experience it. To sit and be sittid may be the only way. Nah!



So 6 x 6 it is. Three matches in each two-man team sessions: The Fourball, the Foursomes, The Fourbles. And Six matches in The Singles. The Serb hesitates, but The Serb abides.

One day – 36 holes. 15 points to go. 8.0 for PIA, 7.5 for USA. Simple.

So this 9th AJ Cup is happening at The Ocean Course at Half Moon Bay Golf Links. First time for a Cali Cup. Beautiful. The venue is equally unknown for all. The weather will be Pacific Ocean chilly (low 60s) with wind and sun. The Serb cleverly sees that favoring Team PIA a bit with four perennial deserters on Team USA and June is wicked hot down under. The Serb is searching. Nothing much more to say.

The Serb's sees it like this...

### **Team Peoria (needs 6.0 points to win back the Cup FINALLY)**

3 Stan Collins STL (4-3-1) – Third AJC 3-1 in 2023 (#1 in PIA OoM) He is simply the straw that stirs PIA's Arnold Palmer. The only one that Team USA fears. And apparently, head case + head case = not wacko. This Angry Beaver really completes his boy, TBK.

1 Dan Maloof LUF (3-8-1) – Fourth AJC 0-4 in 2023 (#2 in PIA OoM) Annual most improved player. Contends all the time. Wins often. Yet his AJC record is understandably perplexful. Good knee now, good wrist now. World #1 prolly goona play like it.

5 Tucker Kennedy TBK (5-3-0) CAPTAIN – Third AJC 3-1 in 2023 (#6 in PIA OoM) The bizarro LUF. Contending more (NS), but still only one Majors win (OS). Great AJC record. Best partner in the field. The YCC to STL's GNR – or some junk like that.

16 Brett Tilly W (11-18-3) – Ninth AJC 0-4 in 2023 (#8 in PIA OoM) Never missed one. The most up and down of Team PIA. Impossible to think 0-6-2 in Singles. Impossible.

8 Brent Deener BDD (3-7-2) – Fourth AJC (#9 in PIA OoM) First since 2017. Record is very PIA from before PIA was PIA. Recently rejoined the OWGR Top Ten on the strength of something.

21 Rich Amberg AMB (0-0-0) – First AJC (#18 in PIA OoM) ROOKIE. Nuff Said. No big deck of cards gonna smooth the nerves.

**T-Peoria Overall** – Team PIA is predictably strong in parts. They always are. The Serb has read this song before. Individually they know they can win. As a team, they know they don't. Perhaps in an absurd colloquial irony the team is nothing more than the greatest anti-synergeon since the dudes in New Jersey. Perhaps. But, perhaps not. Pardon The Serb as The Serb quotes Confucius: "He who will never get over the hump, will not ever get over the hump." But this team looks like a team that might be ready to start humping!

## **Team USA (needs 5.5 points to retain the Cup AGAIN) – they’re THE WARRIORS**

9 Steve Berkebile BKB (0-0-0) CAPTAIN – First AJC (#1 in USA OoM) ROOKIE. Much more needs to be said. ROOKIE Captain. That doesn’t happen. BKB has burst on the scene winning and winning more. Will shine in his first AJC.

10 Todd Tilly TST (17-10-5) – Ninth AJC 4-0 in 2023 (#2 in USA OoM) Only player with SIX Cup Titles. The AJC GOAT. Plain and simple. Pressure play 10x Casual play. Unicornial. [note: his back...that back...it’s not a good back]

4 Jeff Doeden DOED (11-10-3) – Seventh AJC 2-2 in 2023 (#3 in USA OoM) Cerebral. Heady. Smart. Calculated. The 2024 DHB domination should have Team PIA freaking freaked the freak out. Need one great iron shot? Right here.

11 Steve Pangbum (5-3-0) – Third AJC 3-1 in 2023 (#4 in USA OoM) Best inside 5 ft putter in the field. Back of the cup. Huge! 4-0 in the Fourbles and Singles. If you are gonna get him, get him early, before he catches a heater.

13 Brad Tilly BT3 (14-15-3) – Ninth AJC 1-3 in 2023 (#5 in USA OoM) Only player to win for both Team PIA and Team USA. And only to lose also, BTW. Feaster Famine. Pray for his partner.

23 Tommy Wagner TW5 (3-2-3) – Third AJC (#12 in USA OoM) First since 2017. Best player in the AJ Cup by far. Gonna look like Oprah out there. A huge add with team expansion. Team USA with a new look and a new TV contract.

**T-USA Overall** – Four wins in a row and they add friggin’ Durant. Wow. The Serb can’t figure how five isn’t in cards. TST back is no joke. BT5 Famine looms. BKB is great, but a ROOKIE. No Sitting these baskets. Maybe The Serb can figure.

The Serb’s answer...

### **The Serb’s Prediction:**

None for the thumb! Team PIA in a synergy.

**2025 AJ Cup Winner: Team PIA (8.0 to 7.0)**

## **----- NEWS FLASH -----**

*Late word is that STL will miss the AJC for health reasons. The Serb is disheartened by this news and The Serb wishes STL a speedy recovery. The Serb has, of course, amended The Serb’s previous Prediction accordingly.*

### **The Serb’s Updated and Final Prediction:**

No big daddy for TBK. Rest for TST. Forget it. FINAROW!

**Revised 2025 AJ Cup Winner: Team USA (6.5 to 4.5)**