



## RUNWAY TO FAIRWAY BY GLEN F. LENTNER RICH ACRES GOLF COURSE

Rich Acres Golf Course is a public golf course consisting of a Regulation 18, 9 hole Par 3, and Driving Range located on the Metropolitan Airport Commission property (MAC). The property is parallel to the N.E./S.W. Runway and Cedar Ave. Freeway and is leased from MAC and operated by the City of Richfield.

Since the course is so close to an international airport, I am constantly confronted with several questions. Does the airplane noise bother the golfers? Do the airplanes bother you or your staff?

Well, there are some disadvantages with being close to the airport. We are unable to use 2 way F.M. radios. Cable locators for trouble shooting electrical breaks and/or shorts in our irrigation system are useless. When N.S.P. is summoned to locate buried cable near the clubhouse or maintenance shop they encounter problems. The reason is the Air Traffic Control Tower. The course is so close to the airport that these electrical devices pick up conversations with the air traffic controllers and the pilots. If the crew gets bored with listening to punk rock or country music during lunch, they can tune in KJJO 104 F.M. and listen to the Controller/Pilot talk show.

The Metropolitan Airport Commission has a fire training facility next to the course and Rich Acres is required to supply water for this facility from its irrigation system. We have been caught a few times on hot summer afternoons with low pressure for syringing greens due to a training session in progress.

The only bothersome noise is from planes taking off on the N.E./S.W. runway which takes them over the Cedar-494 cloverleaf. Conversation is interrupted if you are on the front nine or in the maintenance shop. Landings on this runway and take offs on

the other two runways have very little affect. If an employee is operating a mower, the noise from the mower will usually drown out the airplane noise. Surprisingly, the quietest plane to take off is the big 747 with the noisiest being the small air force jets.

Having a public golf course next to an airport does have its advantages. A central location makes it easily accessible from several suburbs, St. Paul and Minneapolis. Traveling business people frequent the course and driving range regularly. Some of the drop-ins this past summer were Bob Hope and Johnny Mathis.

Some interesting observations since I have been at Rich Acres have been the witnessing of several aborted landings due to other planes taking off or crossing on the same runway. Runway changes usually occur at 7:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., noon and 3:00 p.m. Wing tip Vortexes are another interesting phenomenon. If a person stands on the 3rd tee while planes are landing on the N.E./S.W. runway and the weather conditions are just right, he can hear a hissing sound after a plane has gone by. It only lasts about a second and if a person doesn't know what it is, it can play games with one's imagination.

So, to answer the question, "Do the airplanes bother the golfers?" actually, no. A survey conducted at Rich Acres by an independent firm during the 1984 season showed that of 300 golfers surveyed, only 1% of the golfers responded negatively about location. Do the airplanes bother me or my staff? Not really. Even though there are some minor disadvantages to being so close to the airport, there also is a certain amount of fascination.

## MID-YEAR TURF CONFERENCE AT HOOSIER DOME

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) announces a mid-year Turfgrass Conference and Show to be held at the Hoosier Dome in Indianapolis, Indiana, September 19-24, 1985.

This new conference represents an extension of GCSAA's education program and will offer extra opportunities for  
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