

Technical College's Aviation Program

Football Field Will Become Airport

By MIKE AGIN
Enquirer Reporter

The football field at Cincinnati Technical College will become an "airport" and the sports booth above the stadium will become a "control tower."

The field facilities will be used along with two Navy surplus Beechcraft airplanes in a program designed to train people to be airplane mechanics, and to teach the subject of taxiing an airplane.

Formerly Navy trainer planes, the Beechcrafts startled motorists on Columbia Parkway last March when the planes were towed wingless from Lunken Airport to the school's Trechter Field.

The two planes have been stored at the field since that time.

"We really haven't done anything with them yet," says Vince Devol, one of the two men who co-ordinates the aviation department at the college.

Plans have been made to build a hanger at the corner of Trechter Field. After the hanger is completed, the Beechcrafts are scheduled

for a new coat of paint and general repair. Once this repair is finished, the planes will return to their old trainee status, but on the ground instead of in the air. The Beechcrafts will be used to teach students the art of maneuvering an airplane on the ground, called taxiing. Plans for the field and stadium will not keep the athletic events from being held there.

"IT'S PART OF the requirement of a mechanic," comments Devol. "The co-op employers usually want the students to know how to taxi."

Learning to taxi is only part of the overall educational program to train students for their Air Frame A D Powerplant licenses.

"With this license they are able to handle most airplane repair," says Devol. "Anything that you'll find on aircraft we'll work with."

Part of the program has the students fixing an airplane that has been 'bugged' by the instructors.

"We put trouble in these systems and the students have to work them out," explains Devol, "and the students enjoy this because these are the kinds of things

they'll be doing in the field. We had one student trouble shoot an electrical system the boss couldn't do."

The Cincinnati technical college is one of a handful of schools in Ohio that gives this type of aviation training. Besides electrical systems, students also learn to work on ignition, fuel, welding, fabric repair, wood repair, aircraft drawing, and more.

The aviation program has been in existence since 1970. One 17-member class has graduated from the two-year program, and 16 passed the license exams given by the Federal Aviation Agency (FAA). The second two-year class has 36 members.

Most of the students come from Cincinnati area high schools, but some are from the military. They come from families of every income level, and they come wanting to learn about aircraft. Why?

"A guy just wants to be," says Devol. "It is the desire to be in aircraft."

Now the old Navy twin-engine planes will be used to channel this desire into training experience.