



This aerial view of Rockford CC shows club's blue-tiled pool in foreground, the clubhouse in middle distance and the men's locker-house in upper left. The Rock River shows along left edge of photo.

# When Anderson Cleans, He **CLEANS!**

By Jack Fulton, Jr.

WHEN I reached the Rockford Country Club early on a July afternoon, and because I wasn't sure just where to find John Anderson, the manager, I entered the nearest door to find myself in the men's locker room. More properly, as I later discovered, I was in the men's locker house since, with the pro-shop and tap-room, the men now occupy Rockford's original club building, while alongside it is the more pretentious clubhouse proper.

And what a mess the locker house turned out to be; rug runners up; aisle benches pushed this way and that; scrub pails, mops and brooms everywhere; the bar closed; the shower room blocked off. Here and there a Rockford member picked his careful way midst the confusion to his locker, dressed hurriedly and got out. The only persons who didn't seem to mind the mess were three or four employees who were giving the whole interior as complete a going-over as I have ever seen. All was confusion now, but it was obvious that by nightfall the place would be immaculate.

No, they told me, Anderson wasn't there; I might find him in the clubhouse. Over there was the service entrance to the kitchen. Maybe I would find Anderson if I went in that way.

So I went in the kitchen door, but no Anderson. In fact, there was no one in the kitchen, not even a dishwasher. The place looked deserted, no food in sight, nothing cooking on the ranges, each pot and pan in its place as though it had not been touched for many hours.

I found some activity as soon as I had left the kitchen and entered the dining room for there two employees were just as hard at work with a floor scrubbing machine as the people in the locker house had been with their mops and pails. Tables were bare and it was obvious that no service could be expected in that department of the club that day.

Continuing my explorations I next reached the club lobby where at last I found Anderson busy giving instructions to a group of employees whose objective

was the clubhouse ballroom and whose duties were to give it a scrubbing and then to move on to the large screened-in clubhouse porch and clean it as well.

My first question to Anderson was: "What is the idea of all this cleaning? Have you a big affair coming up tomorrow?"

"No," Anderson replied, "Nothing like that. This is just our regular Monday job."

"But your club departments—they're all closed. You can't do any business in this manner."

"That's right," Anderson explained. "We don't try to do any business on Mondays. First of all, there is a wage and hour law these days which forces us to curtail service in many of our departments—either that or hire more employees. Then, too, we have found from the experience of other seasons that it does not pay to open our departments on Monday; there's not enough volume. So we have a regular policy of closing the clubhouse service departments on all Mondays and all the help, except those needed for cleaning, have the day off.



John Anderson

"I am sorry you came out on a Monday. Any other day in the week you would see plenty of activity around here. I have five employees in the locker house; five in the kitchen; from four to eight in the dining room, depending on the day; and two or three other workers whose duties are less specifically in any one department.

"If a member insisted, he could buy a sandwich and coffee here today, but outside of that, we make no attempt at service. The arrangement is ideal. It gives me one day when I can go over the entire clubhouse and put it in shape for the other six days."

#### Pool Is Busy Spot

One department, however, was obviously getting a big play for a Monday—the swimming pool. It lay alongside the clubhouse, and a good 50 children and a few adults were making full use of its facilities. On one of the terraces, but slightly

removed from the pool, five women were holding a picnic.

"That's something you won't see at many clubs," Anderson commented, "a picnic on club property. But since we are closed on Mondays and wouldn't be able to serve our members anyway, we see no objection to any member bringing in food from his home."

John Anderson has been at Rockford since early 1939. He has a fine background of house training. Twelve years ago Tom Ream, now of Westmoreland CC (Chicago district) but then at Calumet (also Chicago), gave Anderson a job as houseman. At the beginning of the next season Anderson was transferred to Calumet's locker room and in 1931 obtained a job at the Wilmette Country Club as head locker man. He held the job for three seasons and then moved to Kildeer for two seasons in similar capacity. In 1936 and '37 Anderson worked in various departments of Chicago's Edgewater Beach Hotel, eventually having charge of the Marine Dining Room. By this time he had had enough experience to assume the management of Wilmette (where he had first worked seven years before as locker man.) The following season he was given his contract at Rockford.

Anderson is interested in the efficient performance of all club departments, but his especial love is the dining room and kitchen. When he arrived at Rockford, the club had a male chef of better than average ability who was satisfying the members but whose menus, according to Anderson, had a "hotel" flavor—highly seasoned and rich.

#### Prefers Woman Chef

One of the first moves Anderson made, with the consent of course of his house chairman, was to replace this chef with a woman. Rockford is a great Swede town, and Anderson reasoned that, if he could find a good Swedish cook, the food she would prepare would make a hit with the members. His judgment proved correct, and, while she is slower than the male chef she replaced, her food has a home-cooked flavor and must be good before she will permit it to leave her kitchen. In addition to the woman chef Anderson employs a second cook, a dishwasher and a pot-washer.

Anderson has made a number of changes in the kitchen layout since his arrival. The cold room and refrigerator were ice cooled, so Anderson went into

Rockford and shopped around until he found some freezing units which could be installed in the boxes and hooked up to a central cooling plant in the basement of the clubhouse. The cost did not exceed \$100 for these units, and the previous difficulties Rockford had experienced maintaining proper temperature for food preservation were eliminated.

There had been no provision in the kitchen for plate warming and no way to keep bread and rolls warm. So he bought a plate warmer from Albert Pick & Co. and a roll warmer from M. M. Simonds & Co. He rearranged the plumbing in the kitchen so that the pot-washer could operate alongside the range. All told, Anderson spent approximately \$1,500 for new kitchen equipment.

In the dining room Mrs. Anderson helps her husband, serving as club hostess. She greets members at mealtimes, makes all contacts with them when they want to arrange for special luncheons and parties and has control over the 3 steady waitresses and the 3 extra waitresses who are always on duty on Tuesdays, Fridays and Sundays.

The reason for extra help on Tuesdays and Fridays is that Rockford has two ladies' days a week. Tuesday is women's golf day and about 50 women compete. Friday afternoon 60 to 70 bridge players show up. The luncheon business is fairly heavy on both these days.

Strangely enough Saturday night around Rockford Country Club is dead. Rockford is a home town and the members go home to eat. Consequently, the club has not been very successful in promoting club dances and other typical Saturday night activities.

#### A "No Cost" Party

It does, however, hold what Anderson called a "Round Up" on several Saturday nights through the summer. When the members are notified there is to be a "Round Up" they split into small groups for dinner in various members' homes and rally to the club at 11 p. m. to dance until three or four in the morning to the music from a juke box. The club serves no food but does have beverages available. As far as the member is concerned, there is no cost for his attendance at a "Round Up" other than a voluntary contribution of a few nickles to keep the juke perking.

The electric phonograph, incidentally, is owned and serviced by a concessionaire who changes the records weekly and who as his profit takes the first \$5 worth of nickles going into the machine weekly.

The club gets any overage.

Employees of Rockford work under a bonus plan which brings them substantial checks, about equivalent to a month's salary, each fall. Anderson explained how this bonus is handled:

"We add a 10% service charge to all sales, and the money so collected is split up, 3% to take care of the state sales-tax and 7% toward the employees' bonus fund.

"At the end of the season, the Board of Governors get from me a list of our employees, the wages I pay each of them and how long each has been with the club. On the basis of this information, and with knowledge of how much cash is in the employees' fund, they work out the bonus checks. Ten per cent of the fund is not split up, but carried over to the following year. This gives us the money to handle any complaints on the part of an employee who thinks he has not been given enough bonus. Such complaints are carefully considered by the Board and additional checks written if the complaint is justified. If everybody is satisfied, the 10% held back is thrown in with the following year's fund."

#### "WHAT DO YOU THINK OF IT?"

by G. F. E.

Have an Eastern "Clam Bake" near the close of the season.

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Serve smaller parties (up to 25 persons) in buffet style to give a homey atmosphere? At these buffets the guests are seated and do not help themselves; the roasts or other entrees are brought into the dining room in large services and everything is carved and served from that buffet table.

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Do some catering to private parties at members' homes during the slack winter months, if they live nearby or around the club.

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Take motion pictures of your annual "Men's Day" and arrange another stag dinner about three or four weeks later at which party these movies will be shown.

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Have a "Candid Camera" night; pictures taken to be projected later on a similar occasion.