

MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO

MANKATO, MN



PROJECT PROFILE



GEARBOSS® ELITE™ ATHLETIC LOCKER

Division II Mavericks Upgrade to Division I Locker Room

"This locker room has a Division I look and feel and gives us the ability to recruit and solicit talented student athletes who are playing at a level above ours,"

*-Todd Hoffner
Head Football Coach*



CHALLENGE

The team had outgrown the old space that had served the Minnesota State University, Mankato football team well for 30 years. The old metal lockers were starting to rust, required frequent repair, and the space had an odd layout that made access difficult.

GEARBOSS SOLUTION

Wenger Corporation created a spacious locker room with Elite™ Wood Lockers and an impressive place for existing athletes, new recruits and visitors.

BENEFITS

- Efficient locker design to maximize available space
- Contour side profile for enhanced design aesthetic
- Large cubby on top for shoulder pads and other oversized items
- Custom helmet storage compartment
- Integrated hinged seat with base compartment to store shoes underneath
- Enhanced sanitation with passive airflow and antimicrobial surfaces
- Improved visibility with accent lighting
- Safe storage with a lockable cubby to provide security for the athlete's personal belongings
- A striking locker room that instills pride in players and impresses new recruits

HIGHLIGHTS

One of the first things recruits and their families visiting a college campus see is the locker room. For that reason, it needs to impress. It should be grand, clean, bear the school's colors and make the athlete feel proud to be – or aspire to be – a part of the program.

That's exactly why the athletic staff at Minnesota State University, Mankato (MNSU) chose GearBoss Elite™ Wood Lockers, a product brand of Wenger Corporation. GearBoss is known for durability, style and a high-end look that dazzles any home or visiting team.

Room to Grow

The time had come to replace the 30-year-old metal lockers at MNSU. They were old, rusty and the locker room itself didn't allow enough space for the athletes and all of their gear.

"We went through a bid process, but we were already familiar with Wenger Corporation," says Greg Borchert, Project Manager. "They assisted from day one with the design and layout. We had a restricted ceiling height, and they came up with a concept that accommodated our needs and maximized our space."

"When I arrived in 2008, the locker room was already 10 years old," says Head Football Coach, Todd Hoffner. "The Minnesota Vikings had used it during spring training for years, so it endured a lot of use. The metal lockers were dark and not very appealing."

Head Equipment Manager, Dan Rickbeil says the hinges on the old metal lockers were falling apart. "The old locker room was run down. We were in here two times a week re-riveting hinges. It was definitely time for a change."

Hoffner says it took a lot of maneuvering to get in and out of the old locker room, and the layout was not ideal. Each athlete had a 14-inch stool that had to be set inside the locker. With clothing, gear and a shortage of hooks in the locker, there simply wasn't enough space to accommodate the athletes.

They were hoping for a clean and organized area, with a more centralized entrance, and plenty of space for student athletes to interact, socialize or study.

"We wanted a place for them to call their own so they could be with their peers in a welcoming and comfortable environment," Hoffner says.

Road Trip

Wenger Corporation's Athletic Division Sales Manager, Mike Mills, invited the team to Owatonna, MN to tour the facility where their Elite™ Wood Lockers would be manufactured.

"You might only get one shot at this in your career," explains Greg Weis, Assistant Athletic Director for Development and Revenue Generation. "This locker room will stand for a long time, so we had to take the extra time to get it right."

They walked the entire manufacturing floor, reviewing every process involved.

"The tour made us really comfortable with the production value and overall quality," Weis says. "We knew when we left that we wanted to work with Wenger Corporation."

Remove and Replace

The demolition began so the new locker room could take shape.

Some of the mandatory items included:

- A custom space for shoulder pads at the top of the locker that can double as a place for a big backpack during the off-season
- A helmet compartment that creates visual appeal and uniformity across the lockers
- A personal space and a lockbox to secure valuables
- Six hooks in the main compartment to keep athletes organized
- A shoe space in the footlocker with two fans for ventilation

The new lockers are 7'9" tall to create a big impression, have built-in seats to replace the old stools and have contoured side profiles for a sleek, consistent look.

"We want our student athletes to experience a first-class program, and it all starts with the locker room," Hoffner says. "Our mantra is 'Respect all but fear none,' and this locker room conveys that."

As a bonus, Wenger delivered the lockers one week early, which helped keep everything on schedule.

New and Improved

The new lockers and design of the locker room fits the Mavericks perfectly.

"We are very proud that the MNSU team selected Wenger Corporation as their partner for the renovation," Mills says. "They brought us in early to assist with the aesthetic, direction and functionality of the lockers. After having multiple conversations with Coach Hoffner, we were able to finalize the design of a locker that met all of the coaches' and players' needs."

"Mike Mills made it a no-brainer for us," Weis says. "His attention to detail was great. He really made us feel comfortable through ordering, shipping and installation."

"This locker room has a Division I look and feel and gives us the ability to recruit and solicit talented student athletes who are playing at a level above ours," Hoffner says.

The coaching staff agrees that the GearBoss lockers provide the perfect finish to the ultimate team room.



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