

# UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

## PROJECT CASE STUDY



GEARBOSS® WOOD LOCKERS

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– Andy Harris  
Assistant Director of Football Equipment



GEARBOSS® WOOD LOCKERS



## CHALLENGE

Design and manufacture wood lockers for Division I football program.

## WENGER SOLUTION

Customizing wooden lockers to suit program and player needs. Incorporating university colors and logos into locker design.  
Installing 147 lockers in coordination with renovation project timeline.

## BENEFITS

- Lockers beautifully blend form and function
- Integrated ventilation and antimicrobial surfaces enhance sanitation
- Built-in digital picture frame enables locker personalization
- Efficient locker design maximizes space usage
- Lockable cubby provides security, with power for personal electronics
- Accent lighting improves visibility and aesthetics

## HIGHLIGHTS

“Our previous lockers looked outdated and it was also time to update their functionality,” says Andy Harris, Assistant Director of Football Equipment at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis.

“They had a cookie-cutter style and didn’t use space effectively,” he adds, noting that the old locker design and locker-row configuration both wasted space.

The decision to renovate the locker room was also motivated by recruiting. “It’s all about facilities with recruiting,” Harris explains. “We wanted a locker room that gives the ‘wow factor’ every time players or recruits walk in.”

In the planning phase, University athletic department personnel met with Wenger product managers and engineers to discuss the University’s objectives. Wenger then custom-built a prototype and delivered it for on-site evaluation before making revisions at its manufacturing facility.

“Wenger did an outstanding job translating our goals into reality – they were phenomenal,” recalls Harris. “They took all our ideas and developed the best model of any company we worked with – right down to the locker’s smallest bolt.”

These unique lockers include several new features developed specifically for this project. Ventilation ducts are integrated into each locker’s foot locker and topper unit, tied into the locker room’s main HVAC system to accelerate the equipment-drying process.

Sanitation is a “huge issue” for locker rooms, according to Harris. “Through the vents in the lockers, we’re drawing bad air out of the room, whether from smelly shoes, shoulder pads or anything else,” he explains. Drying out everything in a timely manner is important; previous wall-mounted dryers did not work effectively.

“The room’s air flow has definitely improved,” Harris says.

Cleaning the lockers is easy – all wooden surfaces feature an antimicrobial, polyester laminate finish that makes wiping them down simple and quick. This finish material prevents bacteria and viruses from penetrating into the wood, helping reduce the spread of MRSA, colds or flu.

As with all its installations, Wenger developed a number of aesthetic and functional customizations.

The University’s maroon and gold colors are incorporated throughout the locker design, including on the decorative diamond plate steel applied to select locker surfaces. The distinctive gold ‘M’ and “Ski-U-Mah” slogan are both featured. A padded seat, which doubles as the foot locker lid to help conserve valuable floor space, is also a GearBoss first.

To display player information or photos, each locker includes a built-in digital picture frame, enabling a player to easily customize his own locker’s appearance by uploading photos via the USB connection.

“Players want to personalize their own locker right away,” explains Harris. “They add pictures of their families, friends or anything else they like.”

Another unique feature is accent lighting providing visual highlights for certain locker elements, including a backlit, etched-glass door enclosing the topper unit that holds helmet and shoulder pads.

Harris describes the locker lighting as very aesthetically pleasing. “When the lockers are lit up, with the etched glass, there’s a definite ‘wow factor’ – I can’t say enough about that.”

The new lockers have been very well-received and Harris says the locker room has become a comfortable, convenient place for players to relax. “A lot of our players are now hanging out there longer than they did before,” he explains. A state-of-the-art sound system and 26 wall-mounted TVs add to the ambience. “With the locker room’s open design and more locker space, everyone just feels more like part of the team.”



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## PRODUCT LIST

GearBoss customizable wood lockers