

Case Study

EQUIPPING A HALL OF CHAMPIONS

Northwestern College, Orange City, Iowa



Aptly named for its geographic location, Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa, boasts an Athletics Department that includes 23 varsity sport programs represented by 550 student-athletes and 85 staff members (and counting). From bats and balls to singlets, clubs, rackets, and more, each of these 23 unique sports requires its own set of specialized equipment to keep participants safe and at the top of their game – equipment that must be cared for and securely stored to preserve its integrity and prevent loss or damage.

Built in the late 1990s, the Bultman Center – which houses the athletics, physical education, and health services departments – did not have a dedicated storage space for Northwestern College’s sports equipment. Additionally, despite adding more than 200 athletes and several sport programs, the college had not increased its storage components within the facility since its initial construction. This forced

coaches and equipment managers to store their teams’ gear wherever they could find space, which led to issues with accessibility, accountability, and longevity.

“Unfortunately, when it comes to cost savings during new construction, storage is always the first thing to get cut when trying to find savings in square footage,” said Tony Hoops, Vice President for Athletics at Northwestern College. With that, the spaces and systems the college had to offer were outdated and needed to be cleaned and brought to modern standards. This led to some of the program’s coaches to keep gear in their offices – making their workspace cluttered. Knowing they needed to increase capacity, accessibility, and organization for their coaches and equipment managers, school administrators reached out to their local Spacesaver representative for help developing a more effective storage game plan.



From Catch-All to Eye-Catching

Having completed extensive renovations including a new gym floor, new bleachers, and cosmetic changes in the entryway to display the department's new branding and athletics identity throughout the Bultman Center in 2021, the college was not looking to add square footage to solve its storage challenges. With this in mind, our local rep worked with administrators to find an existing space that could offer more productive use.

Just outside of the fieldhouse is a hallway that was being underutilized as a catch-all, transitional space with a hodgepodge of dated static shelving, assorted boxes, and totes storing athletic materials in no specific order – a perfect prospect for the college's new athletic equipment room. During the project's planning and assessment stage, administrators shared their must-haves with our local rep. These included a way to best utilize the small area that was available, improve functionality, and offer multiple storage options and accessories for their teams to securely store uniforms, totes, equipment, and more. Furthermore, the implemented storage needed to be versatile enough to not only increase the storage capacity of the space, but to also make it more user-friendly, increase the number of programs that could be supported, and do it in a way that looked aesthetically pleasing and blended in with the look and feel of the facility.



"I don't know if I've ever been at a school that says they have so much storage space they don't know what to do with it. There's always challenges of space and where to put all your gear."

– Tony Hoops, Vice President for Athletics, Northwestern College



Welcoming All Sports to the Hub

With all assignments understood, it came time for our local team to execute their storage strategy. Working with a limited footprint in every dimension, our rep chose to employ a Mechanical Assist High-Density Mobile Shelving system mounted on rails to maximize storage capacity while preserving access for each athletic program. According to Travis De Jong, Assistant Athletic Director for Facilities and Operations, coaches and staff love the ease of movement the High-Density Mobile Shelving allows.

While the project's mobile storage system delivers increased capacity for all teams in one convenient and secure location, what takes it to the next level is the innovative FreeSpan™ 4-Post Shelving featured in its carriages. Built from Spacesaver's traditional 4-Post solutions, FreeSpan

Shelving is designed for use in any space that needs dependable storage and engineered to maximize flexibility, speed, and functionality for its users and their space. With FreeSpan's patent-pending clip design, coaches and equipment managers can adjust their shelving in ¾" increments – doubling the versatility of the industry standard 1½" increment. This – along with Spacesaver's entire 4-Post Shelving accessory lineup – allows them to not only organize their carriages to securely store the specialized equipment their student-athletes need to perform at the highest level, but also to be more intentional with the way they store and access their gear during the season and in the off-season.



"In a world where you have more and more challenges with the building or renovating of a project, being able to maximize your space makes a big difference. If you're looking for a way to create storage in a way that allows you to maximize your space in a safe, secure, and aesthetically pleasing way, Spacesaver systems allow you to be successful in a user-friendly format."

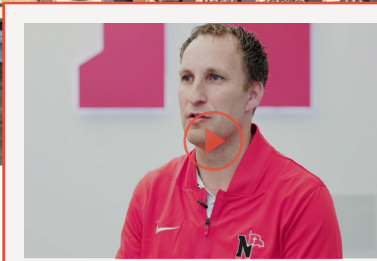
– Travis De Jong, Assistant Athletic Director for Facilities and Operations, Northwestern College



Solidifying School Pride for Classes to Come

Despite being in a locked room out of public access and viewing, the High-Density Mobile Shelving system's custom end panel design maintains the college's athletic identity. Now, users get a daily reminder of the care and concern their administration puts into supporting their efforts – not to mention the value it brings to recruiting top talent to the program. Furthering the college's care and concern for its coaches and student-athletes, its High-Density Mobile Shelving has allowed staff to move all of their invaluable athletic solutions to ground level, reducing the likelihood of damage to goods and injury to individuals when compared with elevated systems that required ladders to access.

Outside of team-specific equipment, Northwestern's high-density storage solutions store miniature footballs and volleyballs, as well as other giveaways that are provided to their fans on game days. To support the training tables between the equipment room and fieldhouse, the college's Athletic Trainers have been given their own section of the system to ensure quick and efficient care for injured athletes.



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Video Case Study!**

Partner With Our Storage Squad

Protect and preserve your investment in athletic equipment while also saving invaluable space. Contact us to arrange a free site visit or online consultation with your nearby Spacesaver consultant. We can answer your questions, assess your space, and provide insights and drawings with no cost or obligation.

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