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Allen

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(54) **LOCKER WITH ILLUMINATED INDICIA**

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B44C 5/04	(2006.01)
F21V 33/00	(2006.01)
A47B 95/04	(2006.01)
A47B 67/00	(2006.01)
A47B 96/20	(2006.01)
A47F 5/00	(2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**

CPC ***A47F 11/10*** (2013.01); ***A47B 95/04*** (2013.01); ***B44C 5/04*** (2013.01); ***B44C 5/0446*** (2013.01); ***B44C 5/08*** (2013.01); ***F21V 33/00*** (2013.01); *A47B 67/005* (2013.01); *A47B 96/20* (2013.01); *A47B 2220/0077* (2013.01); *A47F 2005/0075* (2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**

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USPC 312/257.1, 109, 138.1, 223.5; 40/541, 40/564, 568, 574, 575, 606.08; 362/133

See application file for complete search history.

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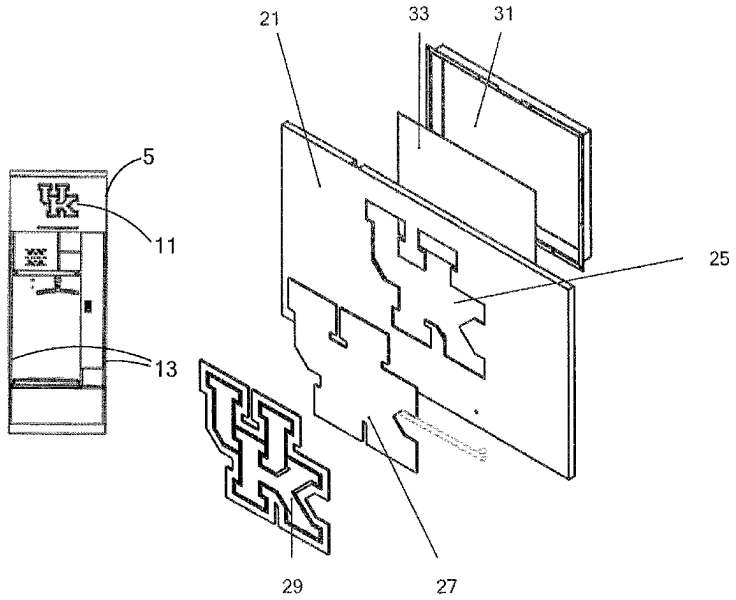
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A locker assembly having a backlit indicia includes a pair of sidewalls and a horizontal top defining a locker enclosure. At least one shelf extends at least partially between the sidewalls and defines a storage space in the locker enclosure. An illuminated panel extending at least partially between the sidewalls includes: an at least partially translucent sheet, a plurality of powered lighting elements disposed under the sheet, and a lighting enclosure cooperating with the panel to enclose the lighting elements.

8 Claims, 3 Drawing Sheets



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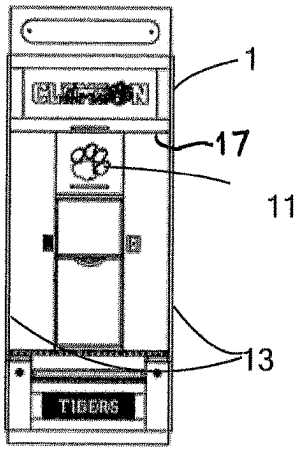


Figure 1

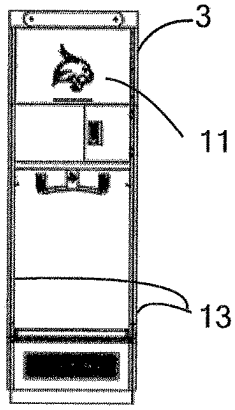


Figure 2

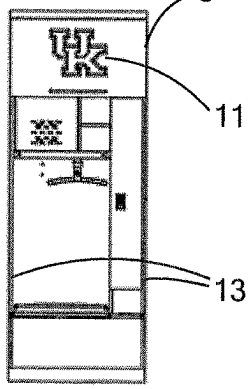


Figure 3

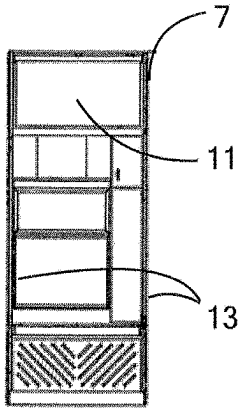


Figure 4

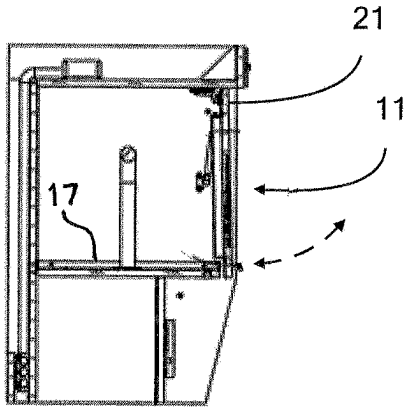


Figure 5

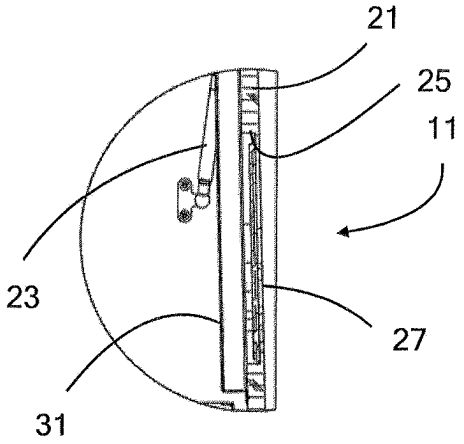


Figure 6

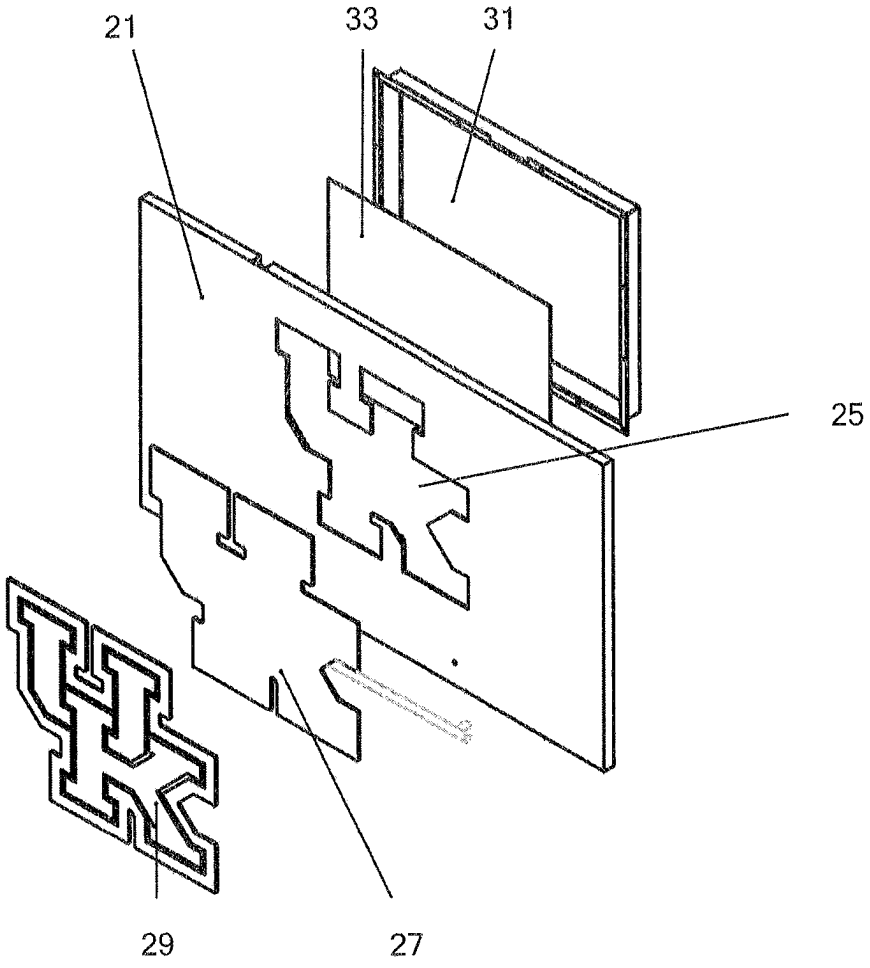


Figure 7

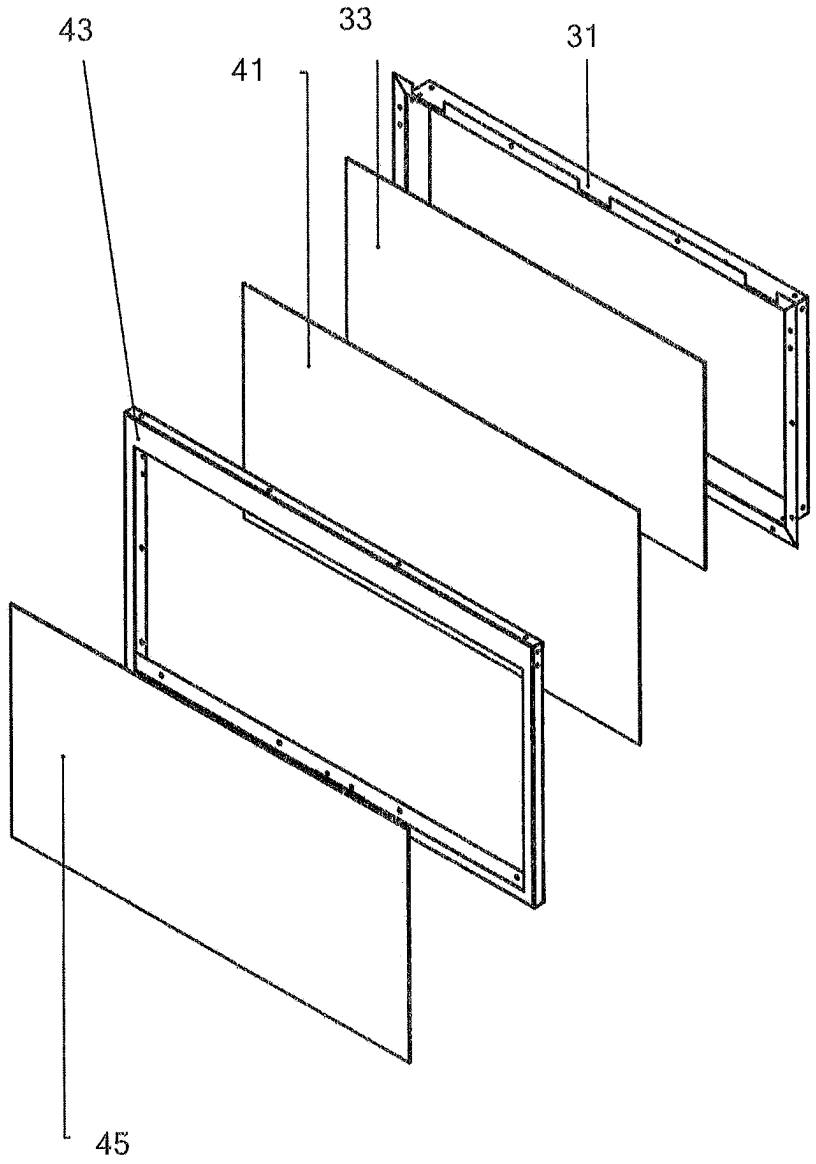


Figure 8

LOCKER WITH ILLUMINATED INDICIA

BACKGROUND

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates generally to improvements in lockers or storage cabinets used in athletic or sporting facilities, and more specifically to illuminated panels incorporated into such lockers.

2. Description of Related Art

The aesthetics and utility of lockers or storage cabinets in "locker rooms" of athletic and sporting facilities of sports teams and country clubs, for example, have become a measure of the quality and prestige of such organizations and an increasingly important aspect of recruiting new team or club members. Modern lockers are a far cry from the simple wood or metal cabinets of the past.

Modern lockers incorporate storage for specific items of equipment, such as helmets and shoes, and features promoting comfort and luxury. There is a constant need for improvement in both functional and aesthetic aspects of such lockers.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The novel features believed characteristic of the embodiments of the present application are set forth in the appended claims. However, the embodiments themselves, as well as a preferred mode of use, and further objectives and advantages thereof, will best be understood by reference to the following detailed description when read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein:

FIGS. **1** through **4** are elevation views of lockers incorporating the illuminated indicia panel according to the present application;

FIGS. **5** and **6** are enlarged, section views of the panel incorporating the illuminated indicia according to the present application; and

FIGS. **7** and **8** are enlarged, exploded views of illuminated panels according to the present application.

While the assembly and method of the present application is susceptible to various modifications and alternative forms, specific embodiments thereof have been shown by way of example in the drawings and are herein described in detail. It should be understood, however, that the description herein of specific embodiments is not intended to limit the invention to the particular embodiment disclosed, but on the contrary, the intention is to cover all modifications, equivalents, and alternatives falling within the spirit and scope of the present application as defined by the appended claims.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Illustrative embodiments of the locker seat assembly are provided below. It will of course be appreciated that in the development of any actual embodiment, numerous implementation-specific decisions will be made to achieve the developer's specific goals, such as compliance with assembly-related and business-related constraints, which will vary from one implementation to another. Moreover, it will be appreciated that such a development effort might be complex and time-consuming, but would nevertheless be a routine undertaking for those of ordinary skill in the art having the benefit of this disclosure.

Referring now to FIGS. **1** through **4** in the drawings, four configurations of lockers **1**, **3**, **5**, **7**, each incorporating a panel with illuminated indicia **11** according to the present application are illustrated. As can be seen, each locker **1**, **3**, **5**, **7** comprises a pair of upstanding sidewalls **13** that generally define the extent of the locker. Each locker may be installed adjacent to another, similar or identical locker, with its rear against a wall, and its front facing the interior of the locker room.

Between the sidewalls **13** of each locker **1**, **3**, **5**, **7**, a plurality of compartments **15** are defined by shelves or other horizontally extending surfaces or platforms. Multiple additional sidewalls may be placed between the "main" or exterior sidewalls **13** to define compartments along with horizontal shelves **17** and the like. As used herein, "sidewall" or "sidewalls" may refer to either "main" sidewalls **13** or other sidewalls arranged between the "main" sidewalls. Each compartment **15** may be sized and otherwise configured for storage of clothing or sporting equipment or other items and may include one or more doors, which may be lockable.

Each of the lockers **1**, **3**, **5**, **7** also incorporates a panel with illuminated indicia **11** (illuminated panel) according to an embodiment of the present application. In each example, the panel takes the form of a door giving access to a compartment behind the door, but the panel may be merely structural or cosmetic and have no other function. The indicia **11** may take the form of graphic art (the paw print and wildcat profile of FIGS. **1** and **2**), lettering or logos comprised of stylized lettering (the UK of FIG. **3**), or printed artwork on a single, monolithic illuminated panel as in the case of FIG. **4** (artwork is omitted for clarity).

FIGS. **5** and **6** are enlarged section views of portions of locker **3** of FIG. **2**, showing construction of the illuminated panel and indicia **11** according to the present application. In this embodiment, the panel comprises a door **21** formed of wood or wood-like material, such as particle board or oriented-strand board. In other embodiments (FIGS. **4** and **8**, for example), door **21** may be formed mostly or entirely of translucent, light-transmitting material. Door **21** may be hinged at its upper extent to a horizontally extending surface of locker **3** so that it may be moved between open and closed positions. In other embodiments, door **21** may be hinged at the bottom or sides. An hydraulic or pneumatic hold-open strut **23** may be provided to assist in holding door **21** open and to prevent its slamming shut.

Referring also to FIG. **7**, indicia **11** is formed in this embodiment by an aperture **25** that is cut to correspond to the outline of the graphic matter to be represented by the indicia, in this case the wildcat profile shown in FIG. **2**. In other embodiments, the outline may be of lettering or a combination of graphic art and lettering or stylized lettering or the like. Secured within, and generally coextensive with, aperture or outline **25** may be one or more sheets **27**, **29** of at least partially translucent, light-transmitting material, such as 0.125 inch thick acrylic, which is available in a variety of colors. Other polymeric or other light-transmitting or translucent materials may be appropriate.

For a single-color embodiment (as in the case of the paw of FIG. **1**), only a single sheet of appropriately colored acrylic may be required and is dimensioned slightly larger than aperture or outline **25** to permit it to be secured to the reverse side of door **21** by adhesives or fasteners. In multi-colored embodiments, two or more sheets of differently colored acrylic adhered together may be necessary. For

example, in the UK embodiment of FIG. **3**, a first sheet of acrylic **29** comprising translucent lettering of a first color is cut coextensive with and in the same outline as aperture **25**, but 0.25 inch smaller. The sheet **29** then is adhered to a second acrylic sheet **27** of a second color. Sheet **27** is dimensioned larger than aperture **25**, and it should be understood that sheet **27** is secured to the reverse of door **21**, sheet **29** thereby being supported within aperture **25**. This produces an illuminated UK logo of letters formed by overlaying translucent sheets of the first and second color.

Secured to the rear of door **21** is a stainless-steel sheet-metal enclosure **31**, which encloses and protects a light source **33** or at least one lighting element and its appropriate wiring for electric power. Lighting element **33** may be coupled either to a power supply contained elsewhere in or external to the locker or within enclosure **31**. The power source may include dimmers, timers, switches and the like to turn off, dim, blink or otherwise manipulate the lighting emitting from source **33**. Preferably, the lighting element is a panel array comprising a plurality white or colorless of light-emitting diodes (LEDs) molded or otherwise formed into a laminar sheet, as illustrated. Discrete LEDs, LED tubes, incandescent or fluorescent or other lighting elements may be appropriate. Colors other than white may be utilized, including combinations of colors. The LEDs or other lighting elements provides illumination for "back lighting" or transmitting light through the translucent portions or sheets secured to door or panel **21**.

FIG. **8** illustrates construction of the single-layer monolithic panel embodiment shown in FIG. **4**. In this embodiment, a single sheet of acrylic **41**, preferably translucent or light-transmitting white, may be mounted within a steel perimeter frame **43** by adhesives or fasteners. This combination then forms the door or panel. The panel LED **33** light source and enclosure **31** are secured to frame **43** behind sheet **41**. A removable graphics sheet **45** may be secured to the front of sheet **41** and is a translucent or transparent sheet (or may be opaque and contain graphic cut-outs or outlines) with printed or otherwise-applied graphics thereon. In a preferred embodiment, sheet **45** is magnetically secured to frame **43**. This embodiment permits the graphics to be changed simply by removing and replacing graphics sheet **45**.

Graphics may also be implemented by combinations of the embodiments illustrated above, e.g. a translucent panel (FIG. **4**) may be combined with a multi-layer graphic (FIGS. **2** and **3**). The graphics may include an LED panel that is capable of displaying rudimentary or even full-motion or television-quality graphics. Such a panel may include the ability to display text banners and the like that are changeable via a programming module.

It is apparent that a system with significant advantages has been described and illustrated. The particular embodiments disclosed above are illustrative only, as the embodiments may be modified and practiced in different but equivalent manners apparent to those skilled in the art having the benefit of the teachings herein. It is therefore evident that the particular embodiments disclosed above may be altered or modified, and all such variations are considered within the scope and spirit of the application. Accordingly, the protection sought herein is as set forth in the description and claims. Although the present embodiments are shown above, they are not limited to just these embodiments, but are amenable to various changes and modifications without departing from the spirit thereof.

I claim:

1. A locker assembly having a backlit indicia, comprising:
- a pair of sidewalls and a horizontal top defining a locker enclosure;
- at least one shelf extending at least partially between the sidewalls and defining a storage space in the locker enclosure; and
- an illuminated panel extending at least partially between the sidewalls, the illuminated panel being oriented in a generally upright position, the illuminated panel including:
  - an at least partially translucent sheet;
  - at least one powered lighting element disposed behind the sheet; and
  - a lighting enclosure cooperating with the panel to enclose the lighting element, the lighting enclosure being secured to the illuminated panel behind the lighting element;
- wherein the lighting enclosure and the lighting element together cover a rear face of the translucent sheet.

2. The locker assembly of claim **1**, wherein the translucent sheet comprises:
- a first sheet of a selected color; and
- a second sheet of a selected color different than that of the first sheet;
- wherein the first and second sheets are overlaid to at least partially define a graphic design.

3. The locker assembly of claim **1**, wherein the panel further comprises:
- an opaque sheet defining the panel; and
- an aperture formed in the opaque sheet to define at least an outline of a graphic design;
- wherein the translucent sheet is disposed between the opaque sheet and the lighting elements and lighting enclosure, so that light is transmitted through the translucent sheet and the aperture.

4. The locker assembly of claim **1**, wherein the lighting elements are LEDs.

5. The locker assembly of claim **1**, wherein the panel is movable between open and closed positions, the open position permitting access to the storage space in the locker enclosure.

6. A locker assembly, comprising:
- a pair of sidewalls and a horizontal top defining a locker enclosure;
- at least one shelf extending at least partially between the sidewalls and defining a storage space in the locker enclosure;
- a panel extending at least partially between the sidewalls and movable between open and closed positions, the open position permitting access to the storage space in the locker enclosure, the panel being in a generally upright orientation when in the closed position;
- an aperture formed in the panel to define at least an outline of a graphic design;
- a translucent sheet secured to the panel and at least coextensive with the aperture;
- at least one powered lighting element disposed behind the translucent sheet; and
- a lighting enclosure cooperating with the panel to enclose the lighting element;
- wherein the lighting enclosure is secured to the panel behind the lighting element, such that the lighting enclosure, lighting element, and translucent sheet all move together with the panel;
- wherein the lighting enclosure and the lighting element together cover a rear face of the translucent sheet.

7. The locker assembly of claim **6**, wherein the translucent sheet comprises:

a first sheet of a selected color; and

a second sheet of a selected color different than that of the first sheet;

wherein the first and second sheets are overlaid to at least partially define a graphic design.

8. The locker assembly of claim **6**, wherein the lighting elements are LEDs.

* * * * *