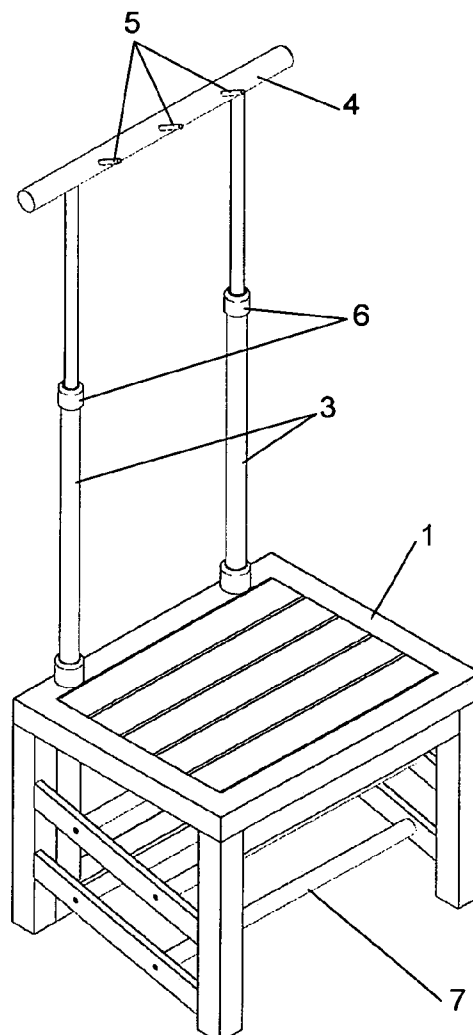




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(19) **United States**(12) **Patent Application Publication**  
**Najjar**(10) **Pub. No.: US 2012/0200126 A1**(43) **Pub. Date: Aug. 9, 2012**(54) **MODULAR BENCH SYSTEM WITH  
INTEGRATED STORAGE COMPONENTS**(76) Inventor: **Daniel Robert Najjar, Sarasota, FL  
(US)**(21) Appl. No.: **12/929,673**(22) Filed: **Feb. 8, 2011****Publication Classification**(51) **Int. Cl.**  
**A47C 7/62** (2006.01)  
**A47C 11/00** (2006.01)(52) **U.S. Cl.** ..... **297/188.03**(57) **ABSTRACT**

A bench system incorporating storage components for apparel, footwear, and personal items. The bench system includes an adjustable-height apparel rack, one or more under-seat storage components, which may include a shoe rack, drawer, or mesh shelf, and one or more storage components on the side of the seat, which may include apparel/footwear hooks or a storage compartment. In a preferred embodiment, the bench seat system can comprise different colored components corresponding to amateur, collegiate, or professional sports teams, or another color combination selected by the consumer. The bench system may also optionally include a personalized or customized placard. The placard may include a combination of words, numbers, symbols, graphics, or designs selected by the consumer, including a name, favorite number, an inspirational phrase, the logo of an amateur, collegiate, or professional sports team, or corporate logos or promotional advertising. Each bench system unit can be modularly connected to additional units either in a side-by-side configuration or a back-to-back configuration.



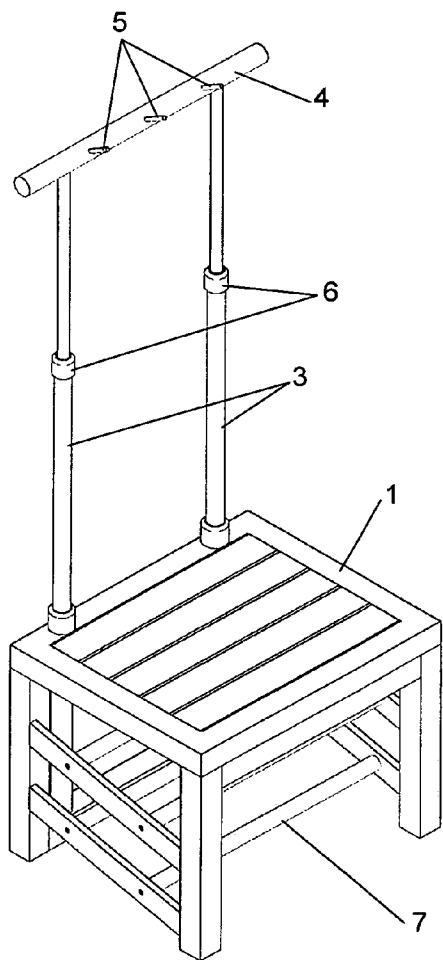


FIG. 1

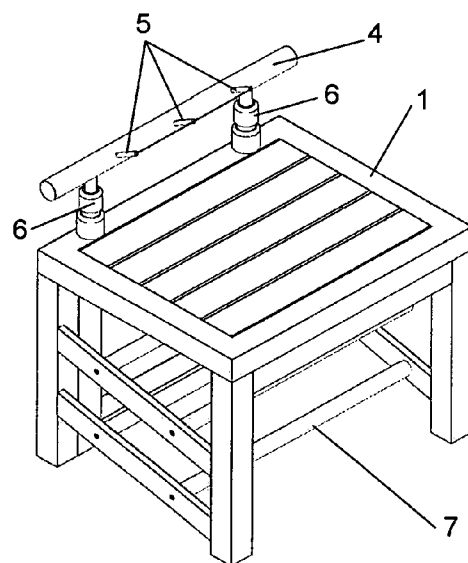


FIG. 2

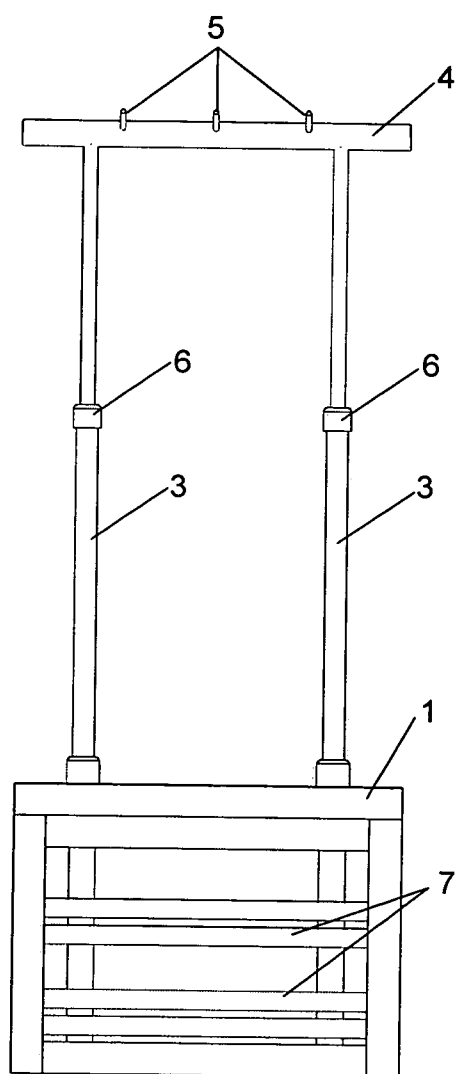


FIG. 3

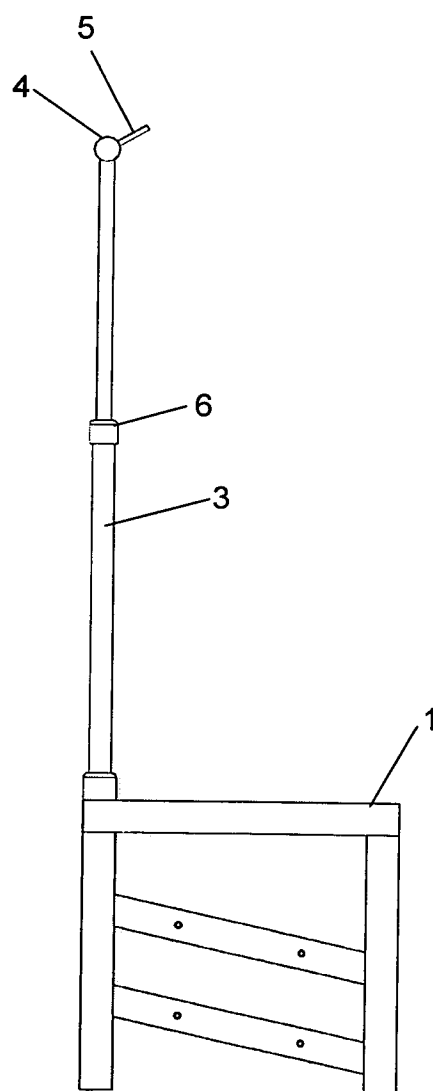


FIG. 4

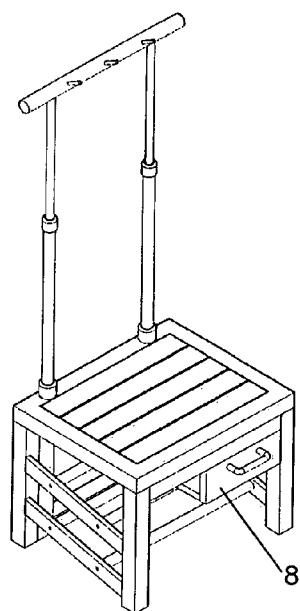


FIG. 5

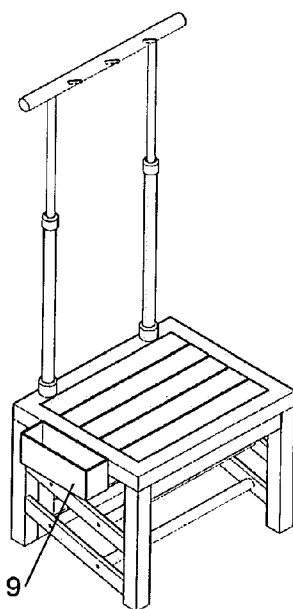


FIG. 6

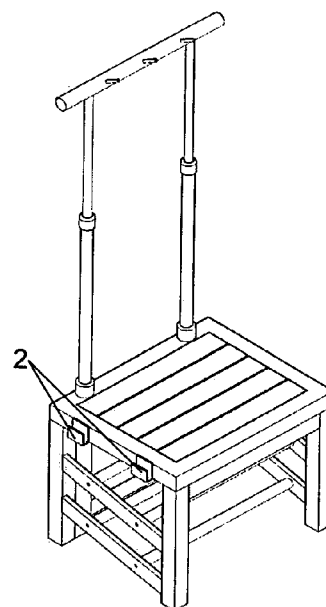


FIG. 7

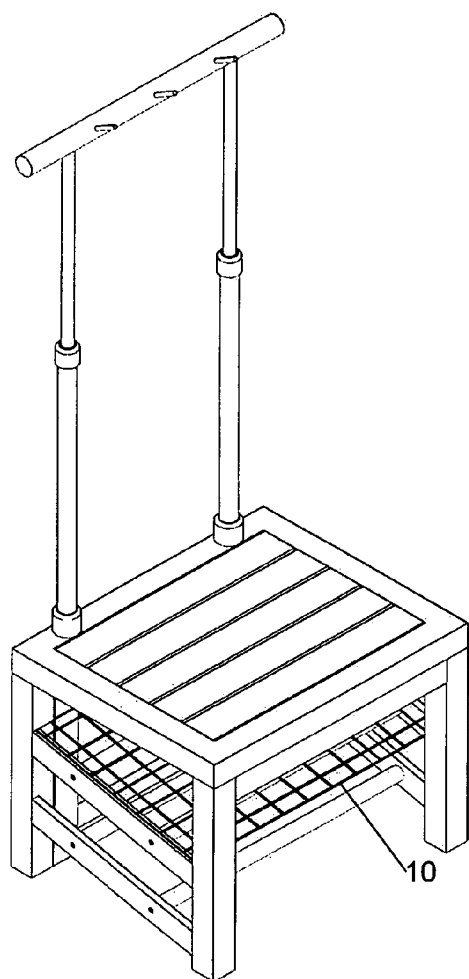


FIG. 8

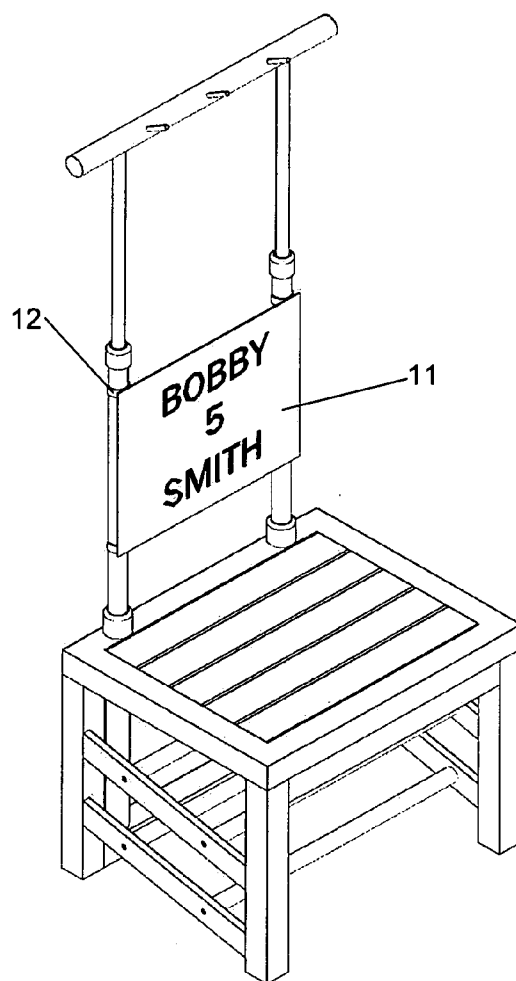


FIG. 9

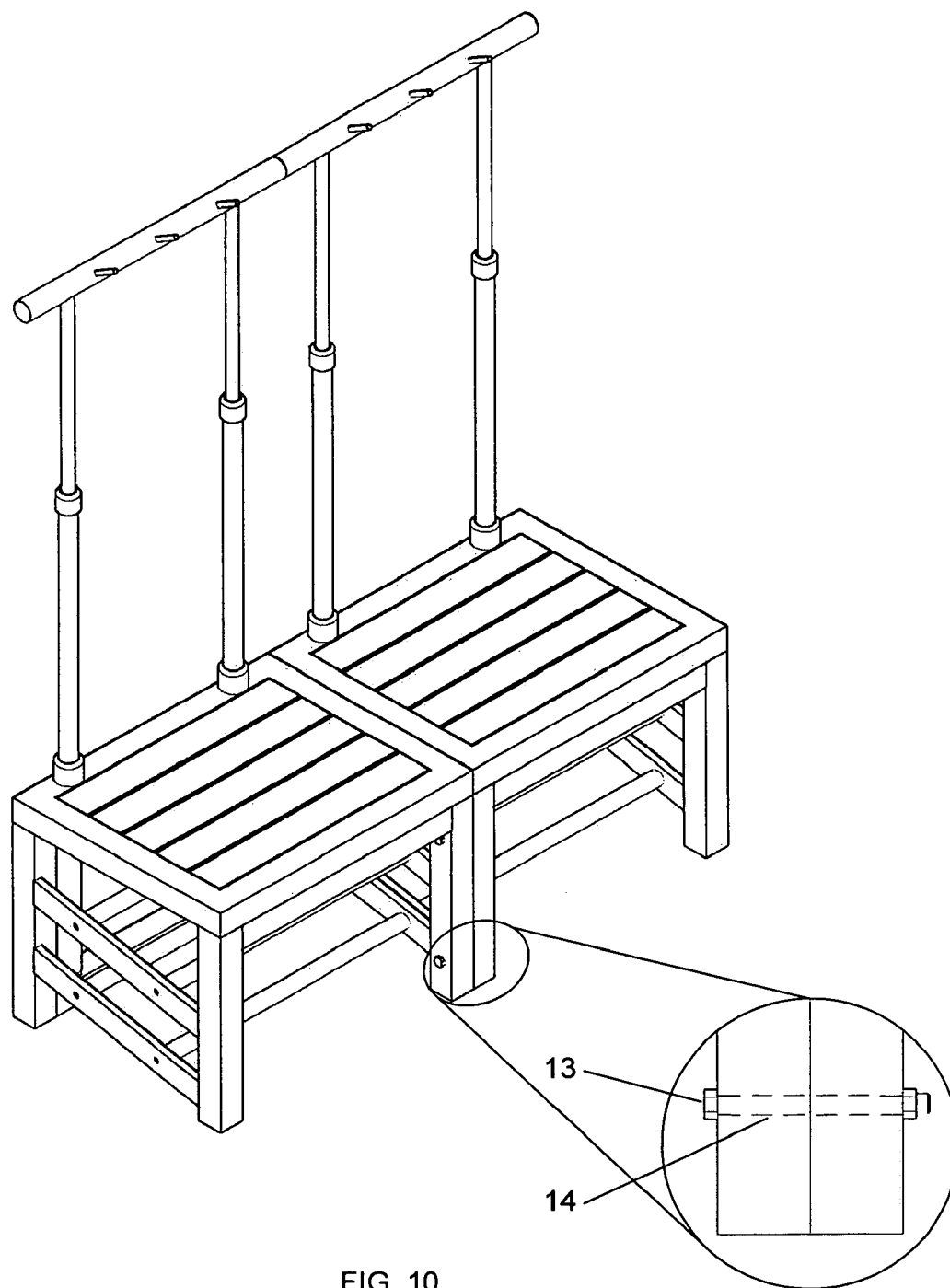


FIG. 10

## MODULAR BENCH SYSTEM WITH INTEGRATED STORAGE COMPONENTS

### CROSS-REFERENCES TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] Not Applicable

### STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT

[0002] Not Applicable

### THE NAMES OF THE PARTIES TO A JOINT RESEARCH AGREEMENT

[0003] Not Applicable

### INCORPORATION-BY-REFERENCE OF MATERIAL SUBMITTED ON COMPACT DISC

[0004] Not Applicable

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0005] 1. Field of the Invention

[0006] The present invention is generally related to benches and seats and, more particularly, to bench systems incorporating storage for footwear, apparel, and personal items.

[0007] 2. Description of the Related Art

[0008] Benches have been used by mankind since a log first fell in a forest and someone sat upon it. The invention of a bench seat, by itself, is not new. Additionally, the combination of a bench seat with an apparel rack and storage components is known in the art. U.S. Pat. Nos. D167,460 and D197,100 disclose and depict the combination of storage and an apparel rack, without any bench or seating component. Likewise, U.S. Pat. Nos. D32,043, D159,953, D198,855, and D199,532 disclose and depict home furnishings constructed of wood that combine apparel storage and seating, but are not modular, adjustable, or personalized. Further, U.S. Pat. Nos. D360,766, D361,437, D362,348, and D436,263 disclose and depict benches that combine seating with an apparel rack and storage of a limited nature, but again, none are adjustable, modular, or include components that may be personalized.

[0009] The prior art does not reveal or disclose the combination of a bench seat, storage components for personal effects, and an apparel rack that is adjustable to accommodate various types and sizes of apparel and to facilitate storage when the bench system is not in use. The prior art does not reveal modular benches incorporating these features that may be connected to additional units, or benches that include components that may be customized to the consumer's personal preference.

[0010] The prior art in U.S. Pat. No. 7,681,345 discloses a specific system and method relating to the use of interchangeable customizable panels in the decoration of goods and particular types of furniture. U.S. Pat. No. 7,681,345 discloses a system whereby a non-reversible, interchangeable logo panel may be attached to and incorporated into particular types of furniture and apparel. However, the system and method disclosed is entirely different from the use of a personalized, removable placard described and disclosed in the present invention.

[0011] It is an object of the present invention to provide a bench system with integrated storage components for foot-

wear, apparel, and personal items to meet the various needs and preferences of consumers.

[0012] It is an object of the present invention to incorporate an adjustable apparel rack to facilitate its use with a wide range of apparel types and sizes and to allow for easy storage when not in use.

[0013] It is also an object of the present invention to provide a bench system that is modular in nature and can be easily connected to additional units to create a larger sitting platform and greater storage capacity, as the consumer desires.

[0014] It is also an object of the present invention to provide a bench system that may be customized or personalized by the use of different colored components and the incorporation of a placard that may be customized to the consumer's preference.

### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0015] According to the invention, in a preferred embodiment, the bench system comprises a bench seat with apparel/footwear hooks or a storage compartment on its sides, an adjustable-height apparel rack having one or more cross-members, and one or more types of under-seat storage. Such under-seat storage may, in turn, comprise a shoe rack, drawer, mesh shelf, or some combination thereof. Further, the bench system can optionally comprise a custom or personalized placard. The placard can include any combination of words, numbers, symbols, graphics, or designs at the direction or preference of the consumer, such as a name, favorite number, inspirational saying, the logo of an amateur, collegiate, or professional sports team, or corporate logos or promotional advertising. Each bench system unit can be modularly connected to additional units either in a side-by-side configuration or a back-to-back configuration for a greater amount of storage or a larger sitting platform.

[0016] In an additional preferred embodiment, the bench system is comprised of different colored components that can correspond to colors of an amateur, collegiate, or professional sports team, or another color combination selected by the consumer.

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE DRAWINGS

[0017] The preferred embodiment of the present invention can best be understood by way of the following detailed description with reference to the accompanying drawings. It is noted that the invention is not limited to the precise embodiments or the precise placement of the components shown in the drawings, in which:

[0018] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the bench system with the apparel rack in an extended position.

[0019] FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the bench system with the apparel rack in a retracted position.

[0020] FIG. 3 is a front elevation view of the bench system.

[0021] FIG. 4 is a side elevation view of the bench system.

[0022] FIG. 5 is a perspective view of the bench system with a storage drawer.

[0023] FIG. 6 is a perspective view of the bench system with a storage compartment on the side of the seat.

[0024] FIG. 7 is a perspective view of the bench system with apparel/footwear hooks on the side of the seat.

[0025] FIG. 8 is a perspective view of the bench system with a mesh shelf.

[0026] FIG. 9 is a perspective view of the bench system with a custom or personalized placard.

[0027] FIG. 10 is a perspective view of one bench system unit modularly connected to an additional unit in a side-by-side configuration, including a detail view of the modular connection.

#### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0028] Referring to the accompanying drawings, there is depicted a bench system comprised of a bench seat 1, adjustable-height apparel rack, and under-seat storage. The bench seat system can be constructed from wood, plastics, metals, composites, or other natural or synthetic materials, or a combination thereof. As described, the bench system allows for the storage of apparel, footwear, and other personal items in addition to providing a convenient sitting platform.

[0029] In a preferred embodiment, the bench seat is approximately 16 inches high, 21 inches wide, and 17 inches deep. Apparel/footwear hooks 2 are affixed to the side of the bench seat to provide storage for apparel or other personal items. In an alternative embodiment, a storage compartment 9 is affixed to one side of the bench to provide storage for personal items.

[0030] The adjustable-height apparel rack is comprised of a plurality of support members 3 and one or more cross-members 4. The cross-members, in turn, are comprised of a plurality of apparel hooks 5. The apparel rack can be adjusted and locked in place at different heights to accommodate different types and sizes of apparel and the preferences of different users. In a preferred embodiment, the support members are constructed of telescoping members joined by "twist-lock" fittings 6 that enable the apparel rack to be fixed at the height preferred by the user and quickly and easily adjusted to a different height. The support members can be constructed from a variety of materials, including plastics, metals, composites, or other natural or synthetic materials, including, by way of example, aluminum tubing or polyvinyl chloride (PVC) pipes.

[0031] The under-seat storage component is preferably comprised of a combination of one or more of the following: shoe rack 7, drawer 8, or mesh shelf 10. The mesh shelf can be flexible or rigid in nature. Like the bench seat, these various under-seat storage components can be constructed from wood, plastics, metals, composites, or other natural or synthetic materials, or a combination thereof. In an alternative embodiment, the drawer is lockable to provide secure storage of personal items.

[0032] The bench system is further optionally comprised of a custom or personalized placard 11 mounted between the support members of the apparel rack. In a preferred embodi-

ment, the placard is affixed to the support members by way of a "snap-on" PVC fitting 12 that allows for convenient mounting and removal of the placard. The placard can include any number or combination of words, numbers, symbols, graphics, or designs at the direction or preference of the consumer, such as a name, favorite number, inspirational saying, the logo of an amateur, collegiate, or professional sports team, or corporate logos or promotional advertising.

[0033] Further, in the preferred embodiment, the bench system is comprised of different colored components. The colors of the components can correspond to an amateur, collegiate, or professional sports team, or another combination of colors selected by the consumer.

[0034] In the preferred embodiment, each bench seat unit can be modularly connected to additional units by means of through bolts or other fasteners 13 for greater storage or a larger sitting platform. This modular connection between bench seat units can be in a side-by-side configuration, or alternatively, a back-to-back configuration. For either configuration, the bench seat units are modularly connected using through bolts to connect the legs of the bench seat units by way of pre-drilled connecting holes 14.

#### SEQUENCE LISTING

[0035] Not Applicable

I claim:

1. A bench system comprising a bench seat, an adjustable-height apparel rack, and under-seat storage.

2. The bench system as in claim 1, wherein said bench seat further comprises a plurality of apparel/footwear hooks on the sides of the seat.

3. The bench system as in claim 1, wherein said bench seat further comprises a storage compartment on the side of the seat.

4. The bench system as in claim 1, wherein said adjustable-height apparel rack comprises a plurality of cross-members.

5. The bench system as recited in claim 1, further comprising a custom or personalized placard.

6. The bench system as in claim 1, wherein said under-seat storage comprises a shoe rack.

7. The bench system as in claim 1, wherein said under-seat storage comprises a drawer.

8. The bench system as in claim 1, wherein said under-seat storage comprises a mesh shelf.

9. The bench system as in claim 1, wherein the components of said bench system comprise different colors.

10. The bench system as in claim 1, wherein said bench system unit can be modularly connected to additional bench system units.

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