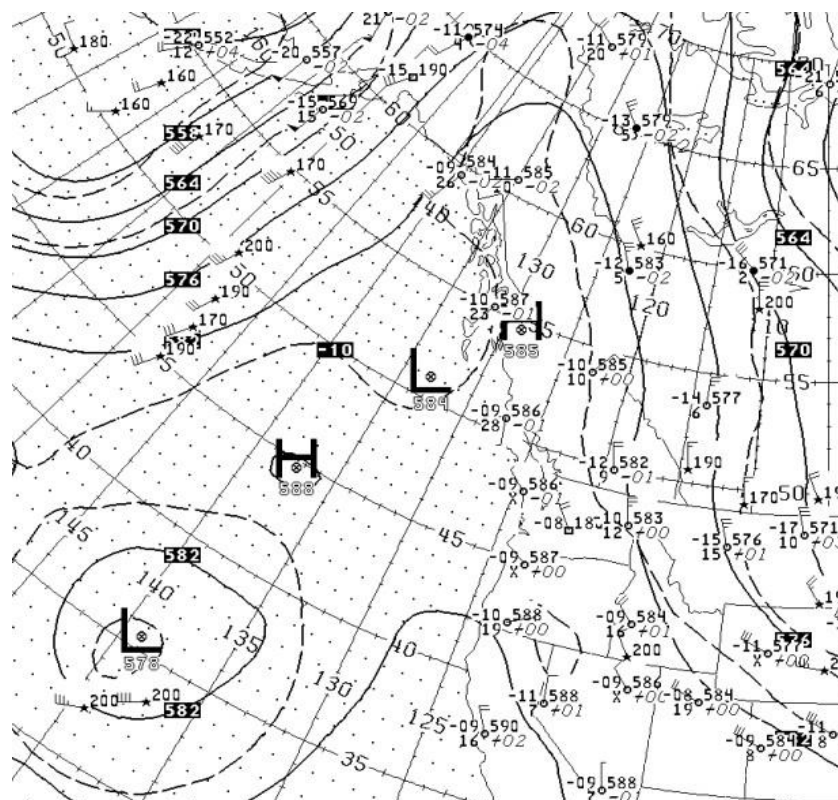


Seattle's Hottest Day and Night on Record

July 29, 2009

For the Puget Sound region in mid-summer, the day to day variation in temperatures is often defined by the ebb and flow of the Pacific Ocean's marine influence on the interior of Western Washington. In Seattle, the last week of July is the climatological warmest period of the year. It's not uncommon for high temperatures to periodically climb into the 80s during this period, but 90s are less common. And triple digit heat? This has occurred only twice in Seattle's official climate record (at SeaTac airport) dating back to the 1940s.

The first occurrence of a triple digit reading at this location was July 20th 1994 when the temperature briefly cracked 100 degrees. A very strong ridge of high pressure was over the region. That record stood for 15 years, but was superseded by a more impressive event late in July of 2009. Another strong ridge of high pressure was over the region as depicted here:



But something was different this time. The preceding couple days had been quite warm with highs in the mid and upper 90s in Seattle. With no breeze off the Pacific to cool down the interior of Western Washington, Seattle dropped to just 71 degrees on the morning of July 29, 2009. That now stands as the benchmark for our warmest overnight low ever recorded. Though the ridge of high pressure over Western Washington was slightly weaker than that of the heatwave of July 1994, there was another key difference. Easterly winds blowing down the western slopes of the Cascades were unusually strong for mid-summer. This quickly boosted the temperature. In fact, it was already 93 degrees by 10 A.M.! In the end, the high temperature for the day was 103 F in Seattle – a new all-time record high. Records fell across the region with a number of places setting all-time records.

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RECORD EVENT REPORT
 NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE SEATTLE WA
 700 PDT WED JUL 29 2009

RECORD MAXIMUMS FOR WEDNESDAY JULY 29TH 2009

* INDICATES BROKE OR TIED ALL-TIME RECORD

	NEW RECORD	DAILY OLD RECORD	ALL-TIME RECORD
SEA-TAC	103*	95 1971	100 7/20 1994
OLYMPIA	104*	96 2003	104 8/09 1981
BELLINGHAM	96*	92 1960	94 7/11 2007 (+2 OTHER DATES)
SEATTLE WFO (SANDPOINT)	105*	95 1998	96 7/20 1994

RECORD WARMEST MINIMUMS FOR WEDNESDAY JULY 29TH 2009

		DAILY OLD RECORD	ALL-TIME RECORD
SEA-TAC	71*	63 2003	69 9/02 1974 69 7/28 2009
SEATTLE WFO (SANDPOINT)	71*	63 1996	68 7/22 2006
OLYMPIA	64	58 1982	
BELLINGHAM	63	62 1958	

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And to add a little extra excitement to the day, there was quite a bit of thunderstorm activity over the mountains, especially around Mount Rainier. The marine layer would soon cool coastal locations. But over the interior, the heat would persist for a couple more days.

