

Storm Chase 23rd February, 2003

Today was always going to be an excellent day for storm development due to yesterday's intense rain. This increased the moisture levels dramatically. Today's maximum temperature for Archerfield was set at 30 degrees with dew points nudging 20.5 degrees earlier in the day. As with any other severe storm events, the day started off with clear skies and unlimited visibility. The typical cumulus started rolling in from the New South Wales border ranges at around 11.00.

It wasn't until around 2.00 that the first cells appeared just north of the border ranges. The temperature by this time had already exceeded the maximum with it reaching 31.4 degrees and DP's of 19.4 degrees. The barometer was down to 1003.2 HPA and there was a nice jet stream to help the development of storms.

I went downstairs to do some wiper-snipping and saw the first storm build up to my south west. Its updrafts were explosive and the storm doubled its size in the first 10 minutes. I came back upstairs to get the radar image for 1.20 and the cell was starting to precipitate. This storm was moving north-east but quickly died off. This trend continued with several cells passing through the area.

At 2.00 a new cell started to build up outside Warwick. This one did not look like following the same patterns the other cells followed. At 3.10, the cell was still gaining intensity with echoes showing in the green with some pink. Another cell just outside Beaudesert was starting to form as well. These cells did not move in the usual north east path but they moved north west inland. At 3:25, the dewpoint was 21.2 degrees celcius which was an excellent indicator for severe storms.

At 5.00, the cell outside Warwick was almost stationary but it was moving north-east slowly gaining intensity. Other cells were finally starting to form on the ranges and were beginning to move north east without collapsing.

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