

Déjà May? May 14, 2020

Déjà vu is a French phrase that literally translates to “already seen.” It’s a feeling many get when thinking about May weather in Nebraska. Every year, there seems to be a prolonged period where temperatures are well below-average. Summer just does not want to get started. May 2020 is no different with many seeing light snow and air temperatures 20+ degrees below-average this past week.

I plotted the daily maximum (high) air temperatures from the past seven years and discovered that these cold stretches are not abnormal for May (Fig. 1). In fact, it seems “more normal” for our temperatures to be well-above or below the 30-year average temperature. Maybe turf managers like myself are more likely to remember these cool days in May because we are anxiously awaiting summer.

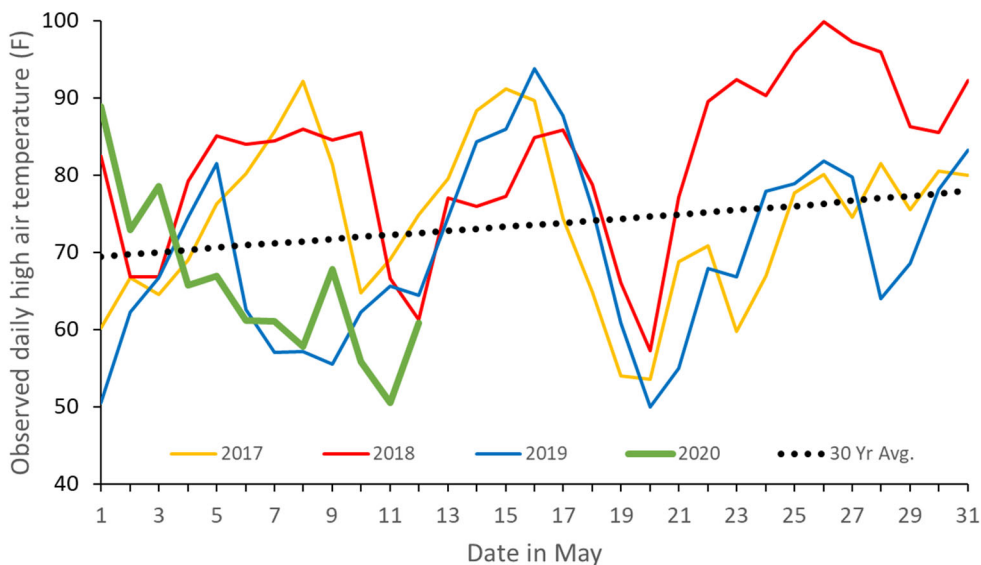


Figure 1. The observed and 30-year average high air temperature in Lincoln, NE. The green line represents 2020 conditions so far. Only the past four years are shown here.

Fortunately, the Climate Prediction Center guidance shows the Eastern US will likely have above-average air temperatures and normal to above average rainfall for the remainder of May (Fig. 2). Summer may be on its way, and if that occurs, then 2020 will go down as another “average” Nebraska May.

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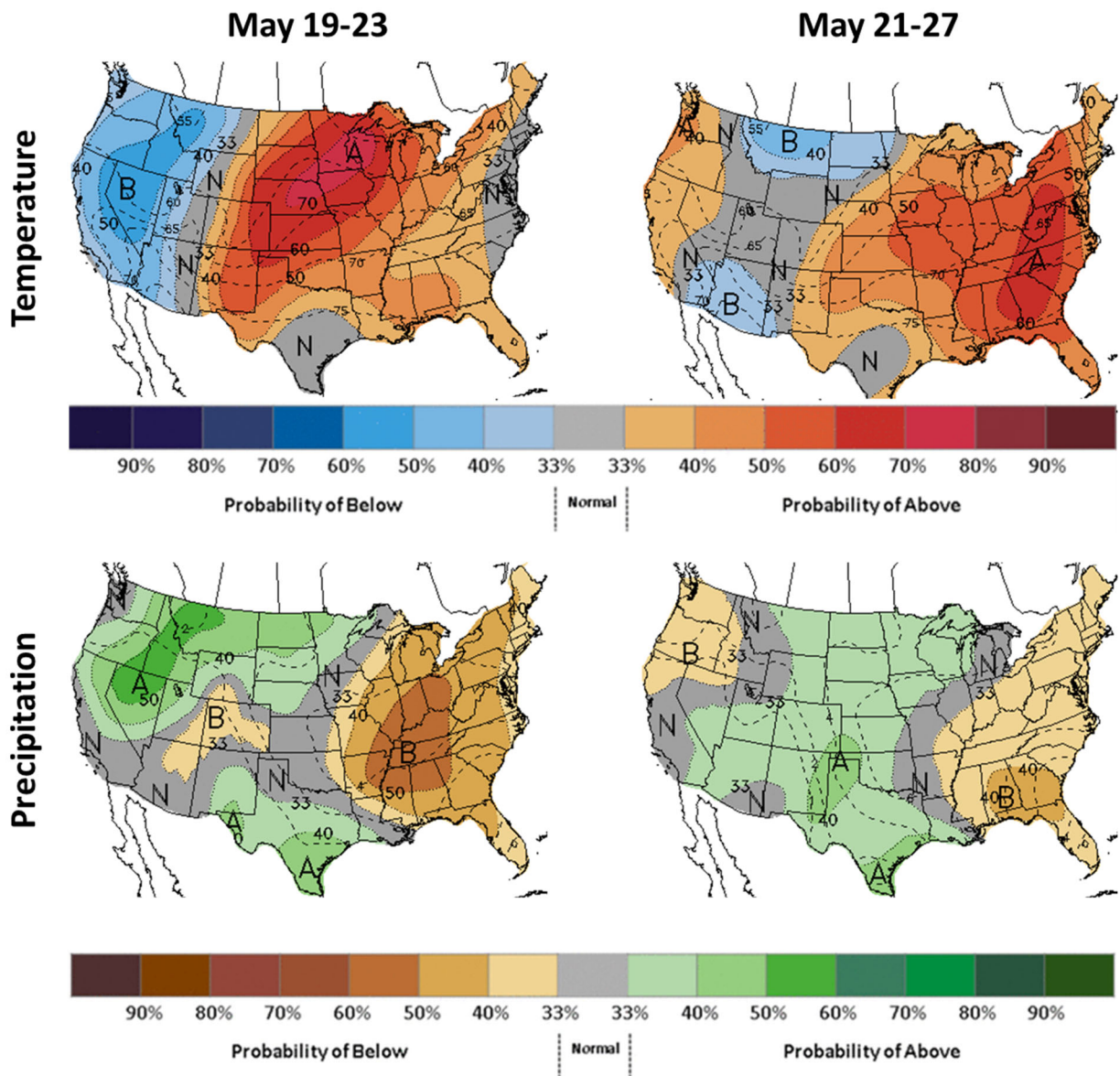


Figure 2. The 6 to10 and 8 to 14 day weather probabilities for air temperature and precipitation from the [NOAA Climate Prediction Center](https://www.noaa.gov/climate-prediction-center).