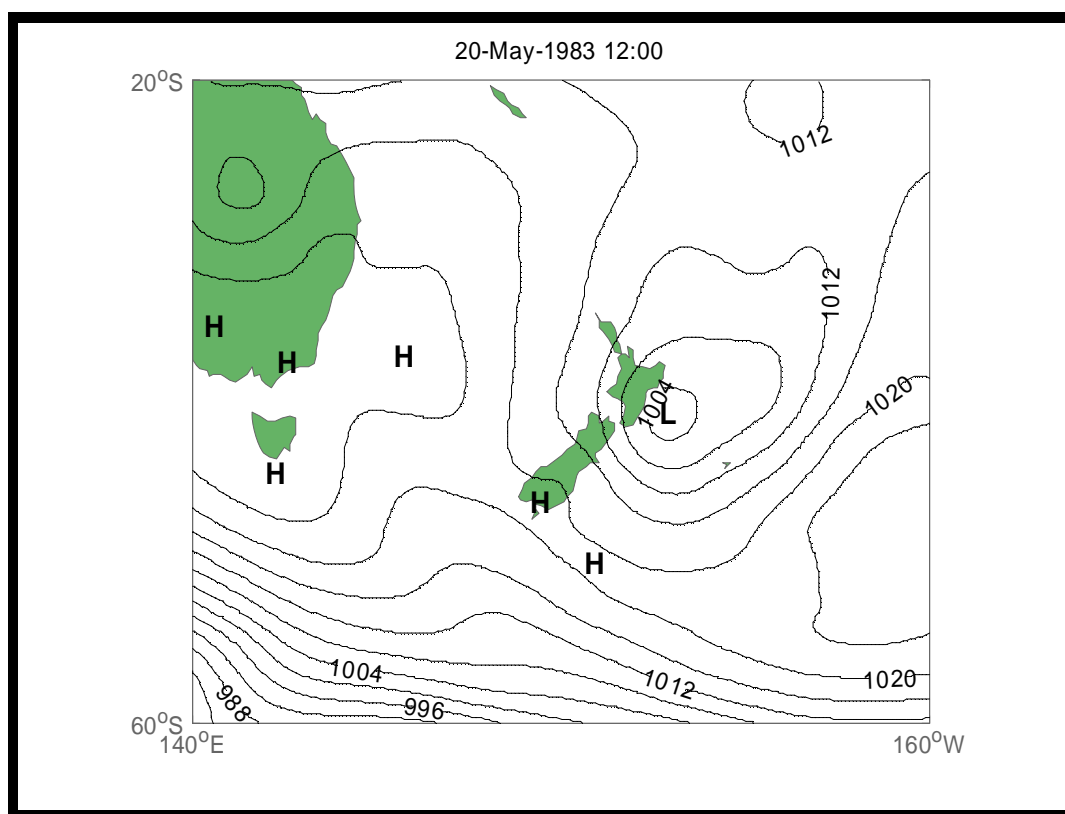


# Coastal Storm Database - Event Summary

Date: <b>20-23 May 1983</b>	Wind Direction: <b>S</b>
Event Type: <b>Wind/Wave</b>	Gisborne Duration (Hours): <b>23</b>
Location: <b>Gisborne</b>	Wellington Duration (Hours): <b>93</b>
Origin: <b>Southern Ocean</b>	Pressure Gradient: <b>SSE to SE</b>
Type: <b>East Coast Low</b>	



## Synoptic Conditions

A secondary low developed over Canterbury and covered NZ while being embedded between two large anticyclones. This cyclone then weakened only to reintensified off Cook Strait. A strong SSE airstream on its western side swept through Cook Strait and was sustained through to the 22nd as the cyclone remained off the eastern North Island. This SE flow spread up the eastern North Island on the 22nd and continued on the 23rd.

## Sea Conditions

Waves estimated at 40ft (12m) in Cook Strait  
High seas on Wellington south coast and along East Coast  
Measured significant wave heights off Gisborne reached more than 4m

## Maximum Wave Statistics

Location	Max Wave Height (m)	Period (s)
Wellington	3.2	7
Napier	3.9	8
Gisborne	4.4	8

\*Highest Significant Wave Height

## Maximum Wind Gusts (kph and dir)

	Date	Gisborne	Napier	Wellington
	20-May-83		52 (W)	128 (SW)
	21-May-83		57 (SW)	122 (SW)
	22-May-83	76 (S)	63 (SW)	122 (SW)
	23-May-83	85 (S)	57 (SW)	93 (S)

### Impact Area

Gisborne

### Impacts and Damages

- Highest wind gust at Gisborne was 85 km/hr on Monday (23rd); strongest this year
- Large waves crashed against harbour breakwater
- Most of fishing fleet confined to Port
- Harbourmaster described sea conditions as 5m heavy SE swell

Wellington

- Longest gale yet in Wellington: winds over 75km/hr recorded for 32 consecutive hours between 2am Saturday (21st) to 10am Sunday (22nd); highest mean speed was 100 km/hr (28 m/s)
- Airport cancelled all flights in and out of city; around 200 flights cancelled over weekend
- No Cook Strait ferries sailed
- Wave estimated at 40ft (12m) in Cook Strait
- Yacht smashed onto rocks at Lowry Bay after breaking mooring line
- Debris spread over Eastbourne Road
- Waves and sea spray whipped Petone Esplanade and Hutt motorway
- Minor road blockages and power cuts throughout city
- Freighter 'Columbus' had battle getting into harbour; three attempts failed
- Power cuts in some suburbs (Petone, Lowry Bay, Newlands) from downed power lines
- Storm longer than Wahine but had lower mean wind speed (100 km/hr compared to 145 km/hr for Wahine)
- Car sweep into sea near Point Howard
- High seas crashing into Moa Point Road and Esplanade at Island Bay

### Data Source

- 1 Sea and Air Rescue of 20,000 Gears Up: Dominion Post, 23/05/1983, p1
- 2 Storm Grounds Yacht: Dominion Post, 21/05/1983, p4
- 3 Gales Lash Wellington: Dominion Post, 21/05/1983, p1
- 4 Motorist Tells of Car Plunge Drama: Dominion Post, 21/05/1983, p1
- 5 [Picture - No Title]: Gisborne Herald, 24/05/1983, p1
- 6 Bing Winds Create Problems in City: Gisborne Herald, 23/05/1983, p1
- 7 Some Travellers Head for Home as Storm Eases: Gisborne Herald, 23/05/1983, p1
- 8 The Longest Gale: Evening Post, 23/05/1983, p1
- 9 Gale Shuts Out Containership: Evening Post, 23/05/1983, p1
- 10 Ferries Sail, Planes Fly: Evening Post, 23/05/1983, p1
- 11 Air, Sea Lanes Shut, Thousands Stranded: Evening Post, 21/05/1983, p1
- 12 Yacht on Rocks, Power Out: Evening Post, 20/05/1983, p14
- 13 Only Walkers Were Still Going Strong: Evening Post, 20/05/1983, p1