

Lecture Summary: 1/30/2009

- GEMPAK stands for General Meteorological Package. It consists of a variety of application programs that are used to display atmospheric variables.
- We were introduced to two programs: sfgmap and snmap.
 - sfgmap generates a plot of surface station data. By editing the SFPARM parameter, you can specify the types of variables you would like to plot. A semi-colon separates these variables and the order determines their location around the surface station.
 - snmap generates an upper air plot using sounding data. Using the LEVELS parameter, you specify the vertical height of your plot. Similar to sfgmap, by editing SNPARM you can select the variable type and location around the station.
 - In order to learn how any parameter in a given GEMPAK program works, you can type phelp followed by the parameter name to get a page-by-page explanation of what the parameter is and how to use it.
- We cannot print directly from GEMPAK. It is necessary to convert our plot into a postscript file.
- GEMPAK can only be closed by typing exit, then gpend.
- When pressure is reported in surface station data, the leading nine or ten is omitted. The pressure is typically found in the upper right hand corner. A general rule of thumb is that if the first number is five or higher place a nine in front of the abbreviation, if the first number is four or less, place a ten in front of the abbreviation. However, this is not always the case so use your own discretion in choosing which number to use.