

RF06

Today's flight was a bit more eventful. It started off well, with no issues loading sondes.

Mid-way through the flight, the aircraft data system went out, and stayed out for about an hour. During this time, there was no aircraft data being recorded by AVAPS, and so these sondes will have no aircraft level data. We were doing QC on the plane again for this flight, which means that could still happen even though nothing could be sent to the ground.

There was one fast fall (ID 190550188), which was probably dropped during a turn. The pilots had turned to avoid some flight level weather, so that could have been the cause of the fast fall. I dropped another sonde pretty (ID 180530054) quickly at a level moment since it was interesting there (hence the pilots avoiding things), and that sonde died at 350mbar again. I had an NRD94 sonde loaded that I wanted to drop simultaneously, but the pilots began turning again pretty quickly.

The next sonde (ID 190510560) got stuck in the launch tube. The entire 20 minute sounding is data from it sitting in the launch tube. I had opened the launcher while back there, and could see it sitting there, but there was no way to poke it with the safety gate valve closed. After this, we decided to turn back (it was near the end of the flight anyway). Luckily, with the maneuver to turn back and a little bit of turbulence we hit shortly after, it fell out of the tube. Unfortunately AVAPS had already terminated the channel since it had been more than 20 minutes, so we don't have data from the drop. From inside the plane it looked clear through the launch tube, so the parachute cap left with the sonde. On the next maintenance day I will look closer to see if anything looks wrong. That will likely be tomorrow, but I will try and fly on the NOAA P-3 instead. The next flight day isn't planned until Saturday, which will give plenty of time to investigate the rest of the week.