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Dayton area's snow fall well above average this season

The Dayton region had reached its historic seasonal snowfall average of just over 25 inches before the weekend's storm dumped another 15.4 inches. The storm, which ended Saturday, March 8, put us at 41.4 inches for the season.

That's 164 percent of the normal snowfall.

"Dayton's had some good storm systems," said Mike Gallagher, meteorologist with the National Weather Service. "You've been on the cold side of the systems that cut through Kentucky and that area where we usually expect the snow-producers to happen.?"

But the region is still nowhere near the record of almost 63 inches that fell in the "blizzard" winter of 1977-78, Gallagher said.

And consider poor Youngstown, which at 94-plus inches has had more than twice our total snowfall and their seasonal average.

The latest storm was unusual, Gallagher said, because it came from the southeast, rose over the Appalachian Mountains and hit hard.

The system wasn't particularly slow-moving, which can produce lots of snow, he said.

"It just hit the right spots to bring the moisture across," Gallagher said. "And we stayed basically on the cold side of the whole thing this time around."

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Call it a blizzard or not, shoveling was dreadful

Blizzardlike conditions dump over 10 inches of snow in area

"Sure, it was a blizzard," said Grady Larkins, clearing his sidewalks Sunday afternoon on Stonemill Road in Dayton.

Larkins works in Cincinnati, but the weather kept him home Friday and Saturday. A native of the Colorado Plains, Larkins thought the weekend storm was notable even by his home state's standards.

"I think this would have slowed them down even in Denver," he said.

It definitely slowed things down at Dayton International Airport. While the airport stayed open throughout the storm, airport spokesman Gene Conrad said almost two-thirds of flights were canceled on Saturday.

But the timing of the storm was good, he said, because traffic is usually lighter on Saturday and the airport crews had Sunday to clear everything off.

Matt West, sledding on a hill near the Patterson Homestead with his son on Sunday, was in the 5th or 6th grade for the famed Blizzard of 1978. He didn't think the aftermath of the recent storm compared to the '78 event, when drifts kept some people homebound for days.

"A winter storm is what I would call it," West said of the weekend weather.

The National Weather Service had not given the storm a particular designation as of Sunday, but Myron Padgett, a forecaster at the service's Wilmington station, was with West, calling the event a winter storm.

A blizzard has falling or blowing snow cutting visibility to a quarter of a mile or less, with winds gusting up to at least 35 mph, all for a minimum of three hours.

"Technically, we did not have a blizzard," Padgett said. The area did not see three full hours of blizzard criteria, but there were short periods when the blizzard threshold was crossed, with winds reaching 40 mph in some spots and visibility being a problem as well at times, he said.

And the volume of snow was a record-setter for March 8, he said. The previous mark was 4.4 inches set in 1984, he said.

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