



Moment of Truth

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Thunderstorms are common here in Illinois, but collecting experimental data from them is no small task. Using this 10 meter tower, our team of wind engineers set out to collect real-time wind data at our field site in Rantoul, IL, hoping to capture extreme wind events (like thunderstorms) that pass through the area. For us, the goal is simple: measure the wind constantly and eventually something interesting will show up. Nearly eight months after setting up the tower, Mother Nature finally obliged. On May 9th, 2018, an onslaught of severe weather made its way across central Illinois and looked poised to strike our ever-patient tower. The sky turned a putrid shade of black, thunder shook the earth, and rain came pelting down in sheets. Yet our team sat transfixed, watching this long-awaited experiment unfold with nervous anticipation as the apocalyptic squall came roaring down the prairie. The moment of truth was upon us -- could today finally be the day?