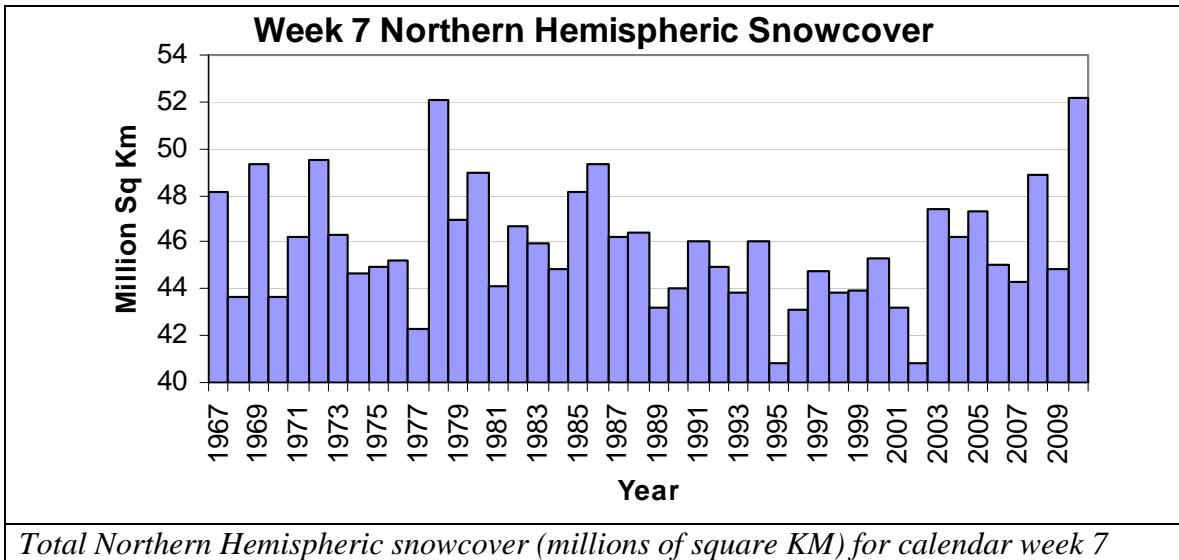


Winter One of the Coldest and Snowiest Where Most People Live

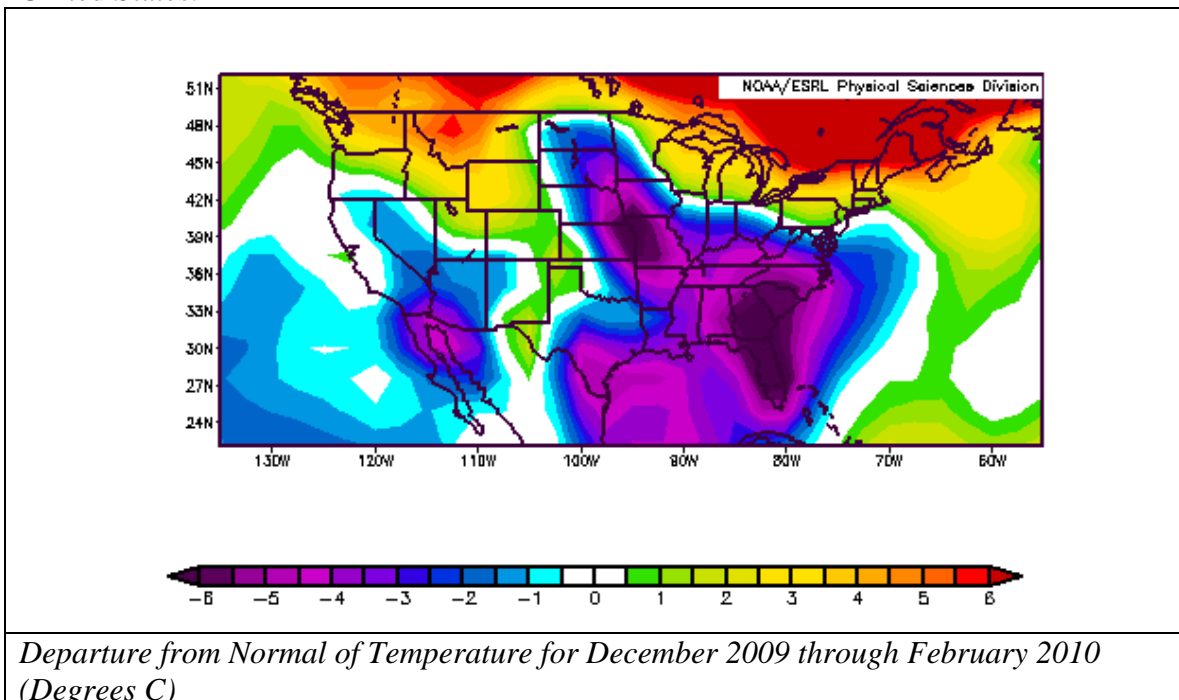
By Joseph D'Aleo, CCM

The winter was a brutal one in the United States and across vast areas of Europe, Russia and northern China.

Near the end of meteorological winter, the northern hemispheric snowcover reached the highest level of the entire record, extending back to 1967, beating out the legendary 1978.



The winter (December through February) temperatures were well below normal in the United States.

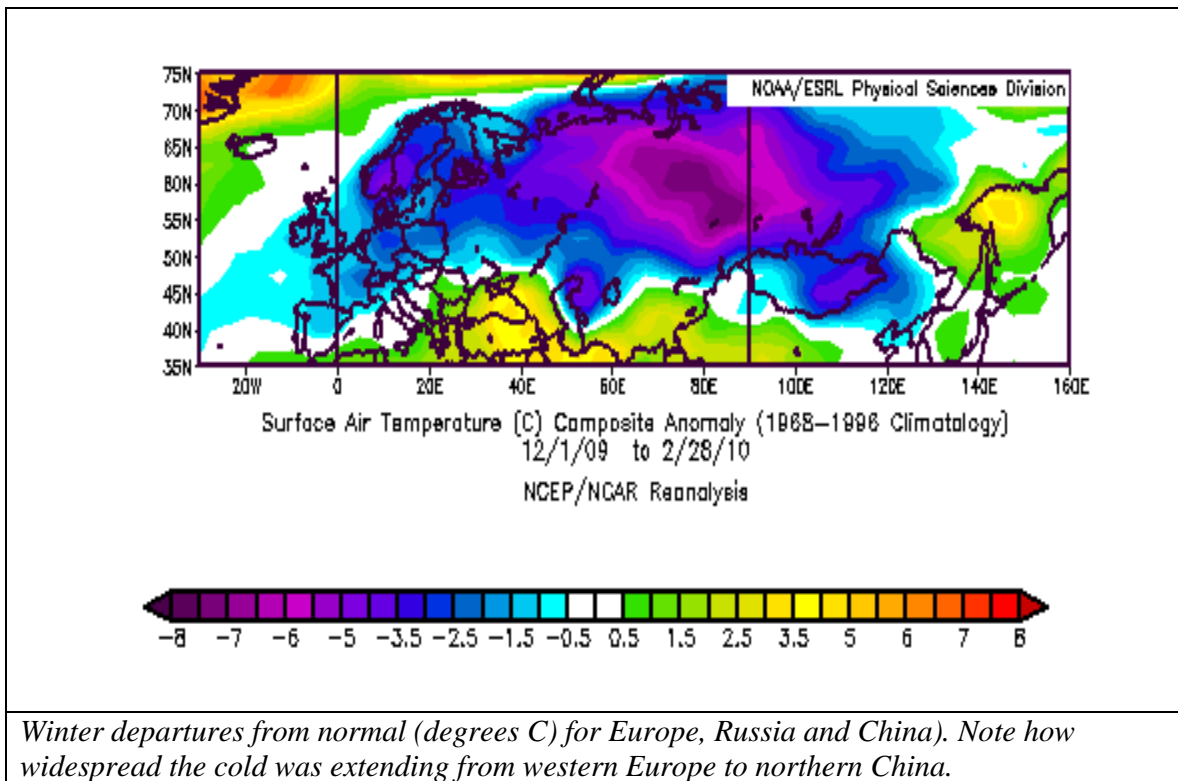


It was coldest from the plains to the southeast, Near the home of Al Gore in Nashville TN, it was the coldest winter since 1977/78 with below normal temperatures in every month. In Florida, it was the coldest winter since 1981, including the coldest 12 day period since at least 1940 ([PDF](#)). Snowflakes were seen in Miami (for the first time since 1978) and Naples (first time ever). It was the coldest in three decades in Key West with the second lowest temperature ever recorded.

New seasonal snow records were set in Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington, DC and surrounding cities. Before the season is out, new seasonal snowfall records may be set from Dallas (now ranking second to 1977/78) to the Midwest and some areas of the Northern Plains.

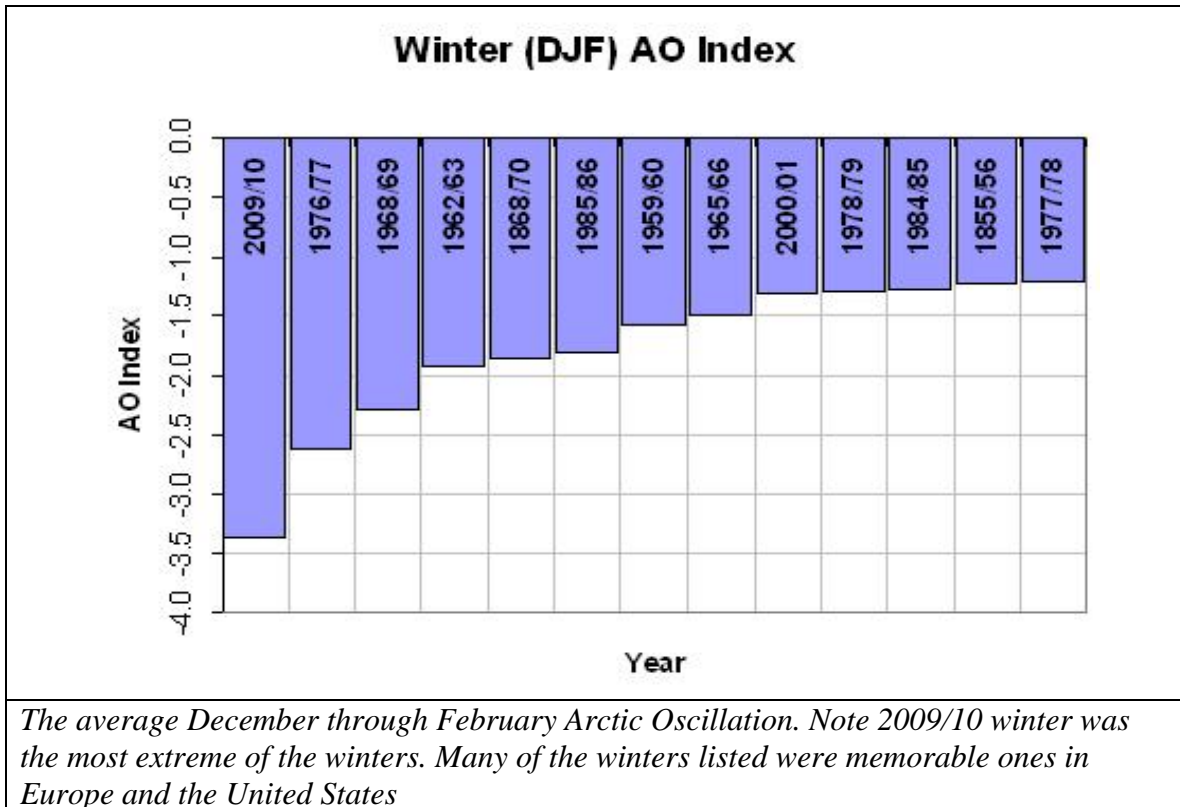
Meanwhile over the Great Lakes the suppressed storm track meant a dry winter. See [this story](#) from Gaylord, Michigan.

In Europe and Asia, the winter was harsh and for the most part unrelenting.

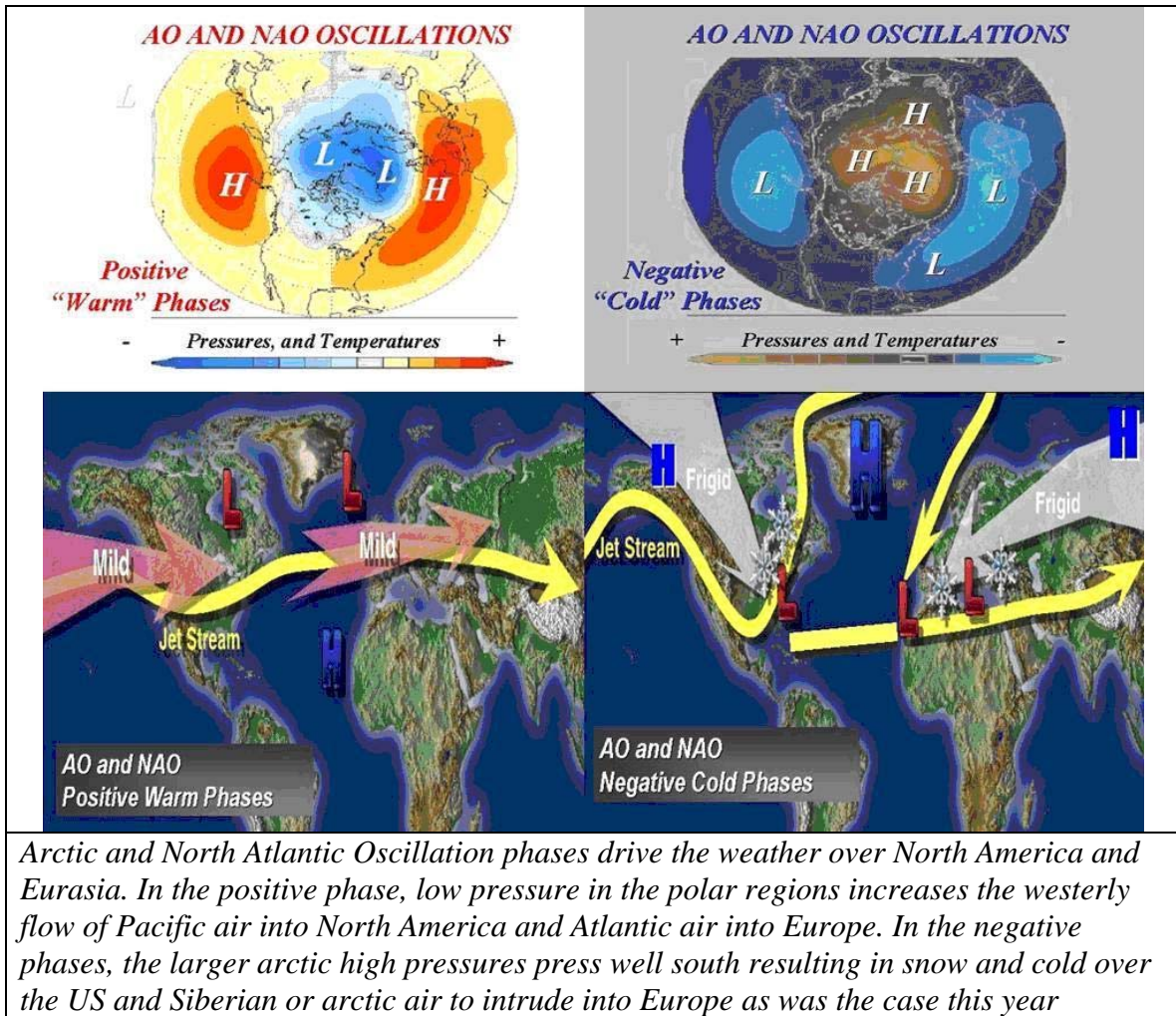


China experienced the coldest weather since 1971, in the UK the winter was said to be the coldest since 1977/78 while in Scotland and northern Ireland, it was the coldest since 1962/63. Many other nations will report similar “coldest winter in decades” over the upcoming days. In Barcelona, Spain a late season snowstorms, worst since 1962 shut down the city.

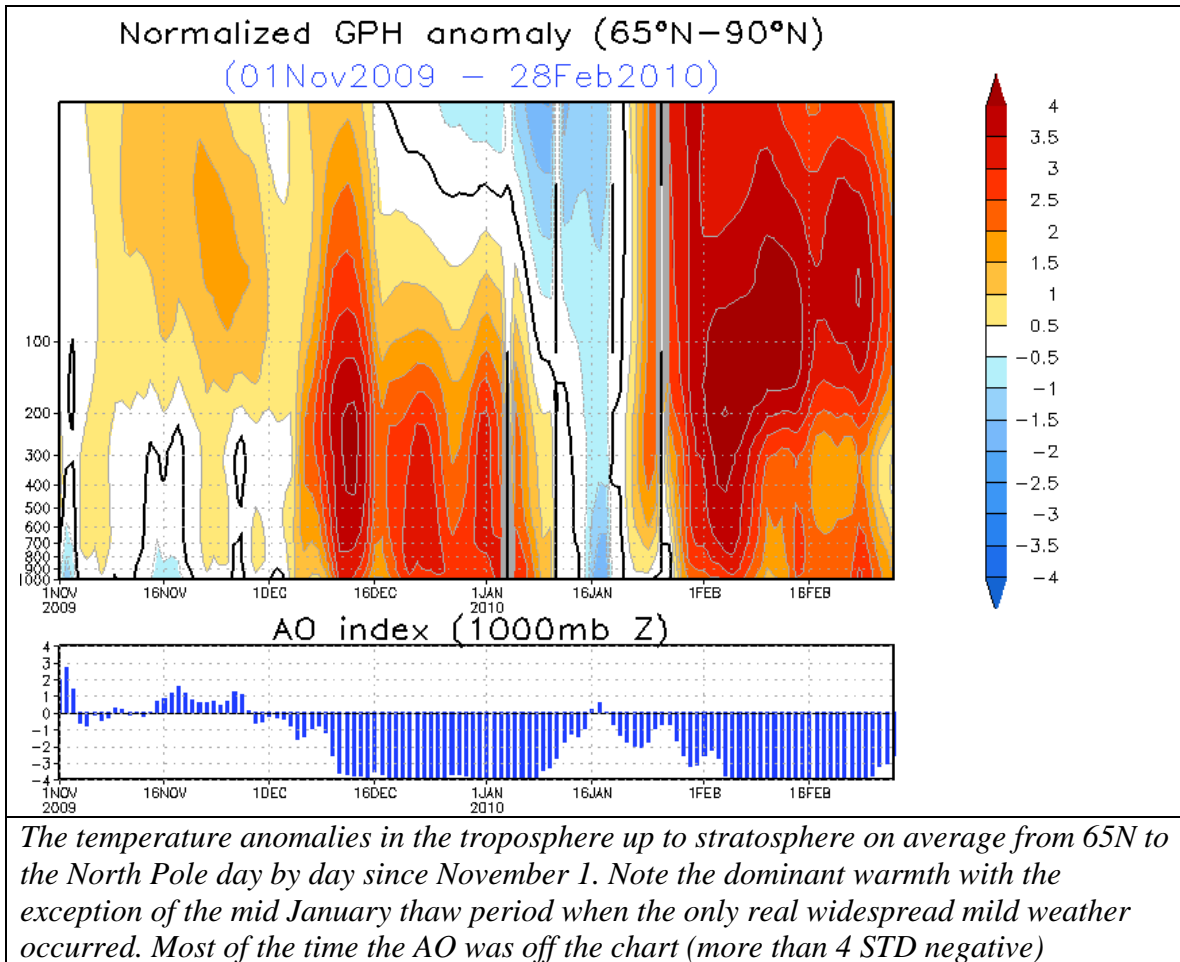
Why the cold? An atmospheric oscillation known as the Arctic Oscillation set a new record for extreme negativity for the winter after having established a similar record last summer. This is believed related to the long solar minimum but especially to the high latitude volcanoes in Alaska (Redoubt) and Russia (Sarychev). High latitude volcanoes are often followed by a negative Arctic Oscillation through the winter.



A negative arctic oscillation forces cold air into middle latitudes.



What drives the AO to be so negative? Often it is a phenomenon known as a stratospheric warming that causes high pressures to develop in polar regions and expand to middle latitudes pushing the boundary of the cold unusually far south (thus the rare cold winter in Florida). This year the stratospheric warming was dominant throughout the winter, characteristic of most of the most memorable winters of the 1960s and 1970s.



The warming is easing and thus the persistent pattern of the winter is likely to change.

We suspect that the nations would be more forthcoming with this information if it were not ‘inconvenient’ to the global warming theory so widely endorsed by governments and thanks to generous funding support, the national weather centers. Don’t expect big headline coverage on NOAA’s new Climate page. Big money is driving the politics and science of the day unfortunately.