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Rain barely enough to settle dust

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LAST Thursday much of NSW saw its first rain in more than a fortnight, for some the first rain in two months, but it was barely enough to settle the dust.

Until last Thursday, Nyngan went 62 days without rain, its longest dry spell since 2005, when there were also 62 days worth. The last time the central-west town had a longer dry spell was 47 years ago, it lasted 74 days from December 1964 to March 1965. Nyngan only picked up 0.4 of a millimetres of rain last Thursday.

It's been an even drier story in the far north-west of the state, which missed out on last week's rain.

The past two months have delivered no rain to the far north-west, including Bourke, Wanaaring and Tibooburra.

Bourke is having its longest dry spell in 10 years, 63 days so far. It may exceed the 65 consecutive dry days it had in spring 2002 if it doesn't get rain by Wednesday morning.

It has been the longest dry spell in five years for Wanaaring and three years for Tiboobura.

The atmosphere has been stripped of a lot of moisture during winter, giving farmers some concerns about rainfall this spring.

There are promising signs in the next few days as drier westerly winds turn moist easterly. Easterlies blowing off the Pacific Ocean will feed a developing low pressure trough, bringing showers and storms to almost all of NSW this week. Most rainfall is likely on Monday and Tuesday, mainly east from about Bourke to Balranald.

Bourke should end its dry spell on Monday but Wanaaring and Tibooburra may have to wait until at least the end of the week when another trough arrives.

