

parel, equipment, and accessories. Sells products to retail accounts, through NIKE-owned stores and the Internet, and through a mix of independent distributors and licensees in approximately 190 countries. Has 362 domestic and 683 international locations (including factory stores) as of 5/31/16. Has about 70,700 employees (in-

16.0% Cl. B (representing director Travis Knight's holdings); other officers/directors, 3.9% of Cl. B; The Vanguard Group, 6.4%; FMR LLC, 6.2%; BlackRock, 5.9% (7/16 proxy). Chairman & CEO: Mark G. Parker, Inc.: OR. Address: One Bowerman Dr., Beaverton, OR 97005. Tel.: 503-671-6453. Internet: www.nikeinc.com

5358 Past Est'd '14-'16 **ANNUAL RATES** Past 10 Yrs. 10.5% 12.5% 12.5% to '19-'21 11.0% 14.0% 15.0% 5 Yrs. 11.5% of change (per sh) Sales "Cash Flow" 14.0% 13.5% Earnings Dividends Book Value 16.0% 10.0% 14.0% 10.0%

15976

2131

4022

6334

181

**Current Assets** 

Accts Payable Debt Due

Current Liab

1489

16011

2033

3128

5225

15025

2191

45 3122

Fiscal Year Ends	QUA Aug.31	RTERLY S Nov.30	ALES (\$ m Feb.28	ill.) <sup>A</sup> May 31	Full Fiscal Year
2013	6474	5955	6187	6697	25313
2014	6971	6431	6972	7425	27799
2015	7982	7380	7460	7779	30601
2016	8414	7686	8032	8244	32376
2017	9061	8180	8460	8899	34600
Fiscal	EARNINGS PER SHARE AB				_Full .
Year Ends	Aug.31	Nov.30	Feb.28	May 31	Fiscal Year
2013	.32	.29	.37	.37	1.35
2014	.43	.30	.38	.38	1.49
2015	.54	.37	.45	.49	1.85
2016	.67	.45	.55	.49	2.16
2017	.73	.50	.53	.59	2.35
Cal-	QUARTERLY DIVIDENDS PAID C=				Full
endar	Mar.31	Jun.30	Sep.30	Dec.31	Year
2013		.105	.105	.105	.32
2014	.12	.12	.12	.12	.48
2015	.14	.14	.14	.14	.56
2016	.16	.16	.16	.16	.64
2017	.18				

NIKE's November-period showing bested expectations on both the top and bottom lines. Revenues would have increased 8% on a constant-currency basis, with particular strength in North America, Western Europe, and China. On the earnings side of the coin, tight administrative cost controls and nearly \$1 billion in share repurchases helped EPS reach the \$0.50 mark. At the halfway point of fiscal 2017 from a reporting perspective (years end May 31st), NIKE was performing well, but there are some concerns lurking on the horizon for the balance of the campaign.

We found two items from the fiscal second-quarter report troubling. For starters, some serious gross margin erosion was evident. Currency fluctuations get a good part of the blame, but rising operating costs need to be addressed. Moreover, future orders grew only 2%, tame from an NKE standpoint. This depressed metric was encumbered by a 4% dip in North America. Competition continues to place pressure on results here. Under Armour, for one, is proving a formidable foe. Its roster of younger pitchmen, namely basketball star Stephen Curry, is connect-

ing with younger generations and prompting some sales to go away from the swoosh. Adidas has grown in stature, as well, over the past year. Because of these developments, we are reducing our revenue and earnings targets for fiscal 2017 by \$350 million and a nickel, respectively.

NIKE stock was the worst-performing member of the Dow 30 in 2016. In a year when that index posted a double-digit gain, NKE fell almost 20% in price. Using history as a guide, that likely means the shares are due for a bounceback in 2017. A popular investment strategy echoes this sentiment. The margin and competition factors, however, will play a major role in deciding that.

These high-quality shares are a good long-term total return play for accounts that slant to the conservative side. NKE boasts our top ranks for Safety (1) and Financial Strength (A++). Too, its dividend was ratcheted up to start this calendar year, to \$0.18 per quarter. The combination of appreciation potential and this income component should be enticing to most accounts.

Erik M. Manning

January 27, 2017

(A) Fiscal years end May 31st. (B) Diluted earnings. Excludes nonrecurring: '03, (25¢); '07, 2¢; '08, 8¢; '09, (13¢); '13, 1¢. Quarterly EPS may not sum due to change in share

count. Next earnings report due late March. (C) Dividends historically paid in early January, April, July, and October. ■ Reinvestment plan available

(D) Includes 21¢ dividend paid December 2012. (E) In millions, adjusted for splits. (F) Each share of Class A is convertible to one share of Class B.

Company's Financial Strength Stock's Price Stability A++ 80 Price Growth Persistence 100 **Earnings Predictability** 100