

BUSINESS: NIKE designs, develops, and markets footwear, apparel, 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 384 domestic and 758 international locations (including factory stores) as of 5/31/17. Has about 74,400 employees (in-

cluding part-timers). Swoosh, LLC, owns 78.1% Cl. A shares, 16.4% Cl. B (representing director Travis Knight's holdings); other officers/directors, 3.9% of Cl. B; The Vanguard Group, 7.0%; Black-Rock, 5.9% (7/17 proxy). Chairman & CEO: Mark G. Parker. Inc.: Oregon. Address: One Bowerman Drive, Beaverton, OR 97005. Telephone: 503-671-6453. Internet: www.nikeinc.com.

ANNUAL RATES Est'd '15-'17 Past Past 10 Yrs. 10.5% of change (per sh) **5 Yrs.** 11.5% to '21-'23 Sales "Cash Flow" 13.0% 13.0% 15.5% 15.0% 13.0% 14.0% Earnings Dividends Book Value 15.5% 9.0% 15.0% 7.0% 12.0% 5.0%

2191.0 45.0

3122.0

5358.0

15025.0 16061.0

2048.0 331.0

5474.0

15355.0

1961.0 17.0

3805.0

5783.0

Current Assets

Accts Payable Debt Due

Current Liab.

Fiscal Year Ends	QUA Aug.31	RTERLY S Nov.30	ALES (\$ m Feb.28	ill.) ^A May 31	Full Fiscal Year
2015	7982	7380	7460	7779	30601
2016	8414	7686	8032	8244	32376
2017	9061	8180	8432	8677	34350
2018	9070	8554	8984	9422	36030
2019	9820	9250	9650	10050	38770
Fiscal	EARNINGS PER SHARE ABFull				
Year Ends	Aug.31	Nov.30		May 31	Fiscal Year
2015	.54	.37	.45	.49	1.85
2016	.67	.45	.55	.49	2.16
2017	.73	.50	.68	.60	2.51
2018	.57	.46	.68	.64	2.35
2019	.65	.55	.77	.73	2.70
Cal-	QUARTERLY DIVIDENDS PAID C=				Full
endar	Mar.31	Jun.30	Sep.30	Dec.31	Year
2014	.12	.12	.12	.12	.48
2015	.14	.14	.14	.14	.56
2016	.16	.16	.16	.16	.64
2017	.18	.18	.18	.18	.72
2018	.20	.20			

NIKE's earnings will probably slip in fiscal 2018 (years end May 31st). Gross margins in the February interim took a turn lower, and unfavorable foreign currency exchange brought the EPS figure below the \$0.70 mark. This has led us to ratchet our fourth-quarter expectation down by a dime, which brings our full fiscal year call to \$2.35, noticeably below the \$2.51 registered in the year-earlier period. It is worth noting that such a scenario has been developing since the start of the fiscal campaign (first- and second-quarter earnings were lower year over year), and NIKE's operations have actually been somewhat better of late.

The North American situation remains a serious concern. Competition here at home is fierce. Adidas and Under Armour are making forays into a bevy of the company's prime areas, as evident by a dip in overall receipts in this region of 6% during the fiscal third quarter. Millennials are proving to be an extremely fickle demographic that demands specialization as well as pricing in their favor. At a time like this it is vital that NIKE gets results from its licensing agreements like the one

with the National Basketball Association and its vast array of pitchmen.

A recent high-profile golf event was a win for the swoosh. The Masters took place at Augusta National in Georgia. It marked the return to that tournament of long-time company sponsor Tiger Woods who has been out with injuries for some time. The NIKE brand was very prevalent and advertising was elevated. Moreover, the winner Patrick Reed has a sponsorship deal with the company. Elsewhere, NKE announced the extension of a pact with the National Football League to provide both uniforms and sideline apparel. Presences like this are important with the extreme level of competition being experienced at this time.

This high-quality equity, though untimely, is a decent play for three-to five-year total return. Investors need not rush in, as NKE handles the North American market woes in the coming year-plus. Still, the combination of appreciation potential and a growing dividend should make an investment worthwhile for the stretch to 2021-2023.

stretch to 2021-2023. Erik M. Manning

April 27, 2018

(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 egs. report due late June. (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 8++
Stock's Price Stability 80
Price Growth Persistence 95
Earnings Predictability 95