

Market Analysis

Issue No. 377

P.O. Box 34-162, Auckland

November 11, 2003

Inside Market Analysis

BUY Technology One	8, 9, 10	NEW ISSUE: Repco Group	14
SELL Biron Capital	11, 12	Australian Warrant/Option Analysis:	
REJECT Abigroup Takeover	4, 5	Past selections yield significant capital gains	15 - 19
Julia Ross Recruitment upgraded to BUY	7		

Editor and Research Director: James R Cornell (B.Com.)

Summary and Recommended Investment Strategy.

Our stockmarket Forecasts are only moderately Bullish, but we see good potential to realise significant investment gains from careful *share selection* of under-valued, emerging growth companies. Therefore, remain fully invested in the recommended shares. Any general market weakness will be a buying opportunity.

Investment Outlook.

Interest rates in Australia and NZ - and globally - have increased slightly over the last 3-4 months. Last week the Reserve Bank of Australia lifted interest rates. Shares have suffered a mild correction, although some prices have come back sharply in interest rate sensitive sectors (e.g. housing). Some investors are asking "Is this the end of the stockmarket recovery?"

In fact, interest rate *declines* are favourable for the stockmarket, but interest rate *increases* are neither favourable nor unfavourable. The reason is that interest rate *declines* usually indicate an economic recession - which is a time when share prices are depressed and usually good value. An interest rate decline can also boost economic activity and corporate profitability or inflate financial asset prices (e.g. liquidity bubbles).

Once the economy *starts* to recover, interest rates begin to rise. This stage of the economic cycle, however, is also a good time to be invested in shares. With rising incomes and attractive investment opportunities for companies, the rise in interest rates has little impact on consumer spending or economic growth. In fact, it is widely accepted that raising interest rates seldom has any impact on housing booms or economic booms!

Even when interest rates do have an impact, there is also the question of *lead times* to consider. For example, normally *two* interest rate cuts could be expected to have a positive and relatively immediate impact upon share prices. The Federal Reserve cut US interest rates *twice* in January 2001 - but the stockmarket continued to decline for another 21 months until October 2002.

Stockmarkets may well suffer a healthy correction - but this will be a buying opportunity when investors can add to "Buy" and "Hold+" rated shares.

Our stockmarket Forecasts, however, are only moderately Bullish for the Australian and NZ stockmarkets. Nevertheless, we see the potential for far above average returns over the next few years owing to the low valuations and strong potential of many emerging growth companies.

Stockmarket Forecasts

	One-Month	One-Year
Australia:	62% (Bullish)	66% (Bullish)
New Zealand:	64% (Bullish)	59% (Neutral)



Recommended Investments

Cavalier Corporation's carpet business has been operating at full capacity over the last year, but the company now plans to install a three metre semi-worsted card set at its Wanganui Yarn plant next financial year (i.e. after June 2004). This will expand capacity by up to 25% in a "very cost effective way". Carpet sales for the first four months of this financial year are up 10%, with profits up 16%. This has been helped by favourable exchange rates (i.e. the NZ dollar is lower than expected against the Australian currency, while both are stronger than expected against the US dollar).

The company also plans to invest about \$1 million in plant and machinery modernisation to reduce production costs at its 89.5% owned Australian business **Ontera**

Modular Carpets. The business will seek to expand its products and brands, with the objective of increasing revenues and profits.

Cavalier Corporation has also increased its holding in **Hawkes Bay Woolscourers** from 76.0% to 92.5%.

As a result of an executive share scheme established in November 2000 - and the strong performance in Cavalier Corporation's share price since then - the company will issue 1.93 million shares (worth \$9.5 million) to executives!

Cavalier Corporation will pay a steady first interim dividend of 4.5 cents (plus full imputation tax credits).

Colonial Motor Company has started the new financial year (i.e. since 1 July) with group sales and profitability "slightly up on the same period last year".

(Continued on Page 4)

Portfolio of Recommended Investments

CURRENT ADVICE	Company	Initial Recommendation Code	- Date -	Price	Perform- ance Forecast	Issued Shares (mil.)	Vola- tility Ratio	Price/ Sales Ratio	Price/ Earnings Ratio	Gross Dividend Yield	Recent Share Price	Cash Dividends Rec'd	Total Return %
<u>NZ Shares</u>													
HOLD+	CDL Investments Ltd	CDI	12/01/99	25	C	187.1	1.9	2.35	9	8.0	30	7.7	+51%
HOLD	Cavalier Corporation	CAV	05/12/95	156*	A	63.0	0.7	1.81	19	6.7	556	124.0	+336%
HOLD+	Colonial Motor Company	CMO	10/11/92	150	C	27.9	0.6	0.21	12	9.6	288	250.3	+259%
BUY	Lyttelton Port Company	LPC	12/12/00	150	C	102.0	1.0	2.68	12	10.3	160	32.3	+28%
HOLD	Michael Hill Int'l Ltd	MHI	11/06/91	46*	B	38.4	0.6	0.75	17	5.7	442	137.0	+1159%
BUY	Nuplex Industries Ltd	NPX	11/02/97	350	A	61.3	0.8	0.41	11	7.1	420	88.0	+45%
HOLD	Renaissance Corp	RNS	13/08/96	85*	C	37.1	1.6	0.14	NE	10.9	41	14.4	-35%
HOLD+	Richina Pacific	RPL	03/11/95	94*	D	144.4	1.9	0.07	4	Nil	37	9.4	-51%
HOLD	South Port New Zealand	SPN	13/02/96	120	C	26.2	1.0	2.75	15	6.5	154	69.0	+86%
HOLD+	Steel & Tube Holdings	STU	08/08/00	146	A	87.9	0.9	1.04	16	8.8	389	75.0	+218%
HOLD+	Taylors Group Ltd	TAY	09/11/99	102	A	24.3	0.7	0.91	12	7.3	214	32.0	+141%
HOLD	Wrightson Limited	WRI	13/01/98	83	B	136.2	1.3	0.31	11	11.5	149	41.3	+129%
<u>Australian Shares (in Aust cents)</u>													
HOLD	Abigroup Limited	ABG	09/03/99	265	A	47.7	0.6	0.25	22	2.0	401	57.0	+73%
BUY	AJ Lucas Group	AJL	13/05/03	120	A	45.4	0.7	0.65	13	3.6	223	Nil	+86%
HOLD	Atlas Pacific Ltd	ATP	14/05/96	73	A	87.8	1.8	1.78	6	13.0	23	7.0	-59%
HOLD	Auspine Limited	ANE	08/02/00	210	B	53.9	0.6	0.65	10	6.1	278	56.0	+59%
HOLD	Austral Coal Ltd	AUO	16/01/01	19	B	154.5	1.2	1.15	9	Nil	74	Nil	+289%
BUY	Aust Infrastructure	AIX	07/10/03	158	B	179.1	0.7	N/A	10	6.6	166	Nil	+5%
SELL	Biron Capital Ltd	BIC	12/04/94	171*	C	38.2	1.6	4.17	8	8.3	30	14.5	-74%
HOLD+	Campbell Brothers Ltd	CPB	12/10/99	418*	B	39.2	0.5	0.66	20	5.0	604	102.5	+69%
BUY	Candle Australia	CND	08/04/03	86	B	37.6	0.8	0.31	14	4.8	135	6.0	+64%
BUY	Cellnet Group Ltd	CLT	12/02/02	152	C	49.5	1.0	0.14	8	7.9	89	13.0	-33%
BUY	Commander Comm.	CDR	11/09/01	92	C	145.1	1.0	0.43	10	4.5	100	9.1	+19%
BUY	Computershare Ltd	CPU	12/08/03	189	A	544.1	0.9	2.78	60	1.4	362	2.5	+93%
BUY	Health Communication	HCN	07/10/03	101	C	61.5	0.9	2.61	43	Nil	126	Nil	+25%
HOLD	IASbet Ltd	IAS	11/02/03	180	C	41.0	1.1	0.11	10	6.4	118	2.5	-33%
BUY	Julia Ross Recruitment	JRR	14/08/01	92	B	57.4	1.3	0.27	36	6.5	69	13.5	-10%
HOLD	McPherson's Ltd	MCP	10/10/00	125	B	54.8	0.4	0.70	15	3.4	435	39.0	+279%
HOLD-	Nufarm Limited	NUF	11/02/97	418*	B	155.8	0.6	0.54	10	3.9	516	119.3	+52%
HOLD+	OAMPS Limited	OMP	15/05/01	132*	A	74.3	0.5	0.48	17	4.1	418	34.3	+243%
HOLD+	Skilled Engineering	SKE	12/03/02	126	B	90.4	0.9	0.35	14	6.1	255	25.5	+123%
BUY	Solution 6 Holdings	SOH	15/07/03	59	E	251.6	1.3	0.79	NE	Nil	69	Nil	+17%
BUY	Technology One Ltd	TNE	11/11/03	44	B	298.5	1.5	2.72	19	5.7	44	Nil	
HOLD-	Toll Holdings	TOL	08/09/98	60*	B	309.8	0.6	1.00	24	1.7	840	43.5	+1373%
HOLD	UXC Limited	UXC	11/01/00	55*	A	125.1	1.3	0.96	17	5.6	89	19.0	+96%
HOLD+	Villa World Ltd	VWD	11/06/02	68	B	103.2	0.8	0.78	6	9.6	114	16.0	+91%
BUY	Vision Systems Ltd	VSL	10/11/98	69*	B	167.5	1.1	1.26	14	4.0	100	24.1	+80%

The average Total Return (i.e. both Capital Gains/Losses plus Dividends received) of all current investments from initial recommendation is +146.8%. This is equal to an average annual rate of +34.6%, based upon the length of time each position has been held.

The average annual rate of gain of ALL recommendations (both the 37 current and 120 closed out) is +30.4%, compared with a market gain of +8.7% (by the SRC Total Return Index). CURRENT ADVICE is either Buy, Hold+, Hold, Hold- or Sell. Hold+ indicates the most attractive shares not rated as Buy. Hold- indicates relatively less attractive issues. * Initial Recommendation Prices adjusted for Share Splits, Bonus and Cash Issues.

Recommended Investments *(Continued from Page 3)*

Lyttelton Port Company's share price has been marked down sharply after reporting cost overruns with its new coal facility and the need for \$60-80 million in capital expenditure over the next five years. This expenditure will involve improving the container terminal - possibly involving the purchase of a third crane - and replacing older infrastructure (i.e. the oil berth). Stockbroker and media reports question whether this capital expenditure will impact upon the company's ability to pay dividends.

A look back at Lyttelton Port Company's historical accounts will show that over the *last* five years the business has generated operating cash flows totalling \$91.1 million and invested \$42.8 million in capital expenditure. Furthermore, the company has a strong balance sheet with interest bearing debt of just \$24.1 million compared with Shareholders Equity of \$49.6 million and a market capitalisation of \$163 million. Maintaining the current annual dividend rate of 11.0 cents would cost about \$11.2 million per year or a total of \$56.0 million over the next five years.

So maintaining the current dividend over the next five years *and* investing \$60-80 million in capital expenditure *would* see debt levels rise \$25-45 million to around \$50-70 million. That would not be a high debt level for the company and it is also both prudent and sensible to finance 40-55% of these long term infrastructure assets with debt.

Of course, Lyttelton Port Company *may* reduce the dividend slightly, but this is still an attractive, low risk share for investors seeking high, fully imputed income.

The company predicts earnings (before interest, tax and depreciation) will rise 2.5% this year, although net profit will be lower owing to higher interest and depreciation charges.

Michael Hill International reports first quarter NZ sales down 6.6% at \$15.1 million, while Australian sales rose 17.2% to \$28.9 million. Canada contributed revenues of \$1.1 million (nil last year), lifting total group revenues 10.4% to \$45.1 million. The first quarter is the slowest for the year, while the December quarter is the most important.

Following the new Trans-Tasman tax rules, Michael Hill International attached full Australian franking credits to its final NZ\$0.10 dividend (paid 20 October) to Australian resident shareholders.

Nuplex Industries reports "steady" trading conditions for the first quarter but predicts that net profits for the year to June 2004 will rise about 10% to \$25 million (41 cents per share). The final result, of course, could fluctuate owing to movements in exchange rates and volatility in petrochemical raw materials.

After exporting to Asia for 30 years, manufacturing in Vietnam for six years and operating an office in China for two years, Nuplex Industries is investigating establishing a resin manufacturing plant in China. China is already the "principal supplier of materials to existing operations" and the capital costs of establishing manufacturing facilities close to these suppliers would be "relatively low". Chinese manufacturing would service the group's growing Asian export markets but could also lower production costs for NZ and Australian

markets.

Richina Pacific has again needed to downgrade its profit forecast for the current year by almost 40% to \$4 million (2.8 cents per share). The downgrade comes from the **Shanghai Richina Leather** business which has progressively downgraded its expected earnings from US\$5.0 million to only US\$1.5 million.

Garment leathers have caused the worst problems, with large quantities of pelts purchased in NZ being of "particularly poor" quality. Not only did this cause production problems, but demand for leather garments was weak, leaving surplus stock which the company is now seeking to sell in an orderly fashion. Changes have been made to the way this operation is managed and monitored to prevent a repeat of this situation.

The upholstery leather operations - where the company sees "significant long term growth opportunities" - suffered from the impact of SARS. The division "made the correct strategic decision" to exit its contract processing for one customer and to become the "long term strategic supply partner" for several manufacturing customers. SARS prevented travel to China for 4-5 months during the busiest buying season, so this division did little business until recently but is now receiving "significant volumes of business".

With new plant capacity becoming available from early 2004, Shanghai Richina Leather "will become the undisputed leader in the leather industry in China".

Shanghai Richina Leather has also entered into a contract with US based **Garden State Tanning** and the Chinese state owned **Shanghai Light Industry Holdings** whereby Shanghai Richina Leather will produce up to 50 million square feet of automotive leather per annum within the next two years. This will be used in China's automotive industry, with Golden State Tanning marketing surplus production to its existing international automotive customers.

Richina Pacific is planning to change from a NZ registered company to a Bermuda registered company by the end of this year and will then seek to dual list its shares on an international stock exchange such as Singapore.

Steel & Tube Holdings reports the first quarter of the new financial year is "slightly ahead" of last year, with the full year likely to show "an overall improved result" owing to the inclusion of a full year's trading from **Hurricane Wire Products**.

We have discussed Steel & Tube's strong cash flows and low debt levels on numerous occasions, so it is no surprise that the company has declared another special dividend of 10.0 cents (plus full imputation tax credits) which will distribute a further \$8.8 million to shareholders.

Australian Shares

(This section is in Australian currency, unless stated.)

Abigroup has received a takeover bid of \$3.90 per share from German based **Bilfinger Berger AG**. If the takeover becomes unconditional, Abigroup will also pay a 10.0 cents dividend to existing shareholders.

Abigroup directors, who own 50.24% of the company have agreed to this takeover and already sold a 19.9% shareholding to Bilfinger Berger. They recommend acceptance "in the absence of a superior offer".

Media reports suggest that Spanish construction group **Ferrovial** may be interested in making a rival bid . . . and that Bilfinger Berger would likely respond to that by raising their bid. The current bid is also probably seen as too low by most public shareholders. An investor with 6% of Abigroup has stated he will not be accepting the bid.

Unfortunately, a takeover of Abigroup fails to release most of the value that we see in the company. As we have always stated, we believe that the only way to maximise shareholder value would be to separate the asset rich, low income **Hills Motorway** investment (worth \$93 million or 195 cents per Abigroup share) from the income producing construction business. Such a split could repay a large part of our investment (i.e. in cash and Hills Motorway shares) while having little impact upon the profitability and dividends from Abigroup's remaining businesses.

Clearly there have been good reasons to retain the Hills Motorway shares which will probably increase further in value as motorway extensions will bring in more traffic over the next couple of years. The shares have also been pledged as security for performance bonds for the **Westlink M7** project. However, if the directors now want to sell out of everything for a cash sum, then it would be better to sell off the family silver (i.e. the Hills Motorway shares), distribute the proceeds through a capital repayment and then to sell off a construction business with slightly less ambitious growth plans.

The takeover *maybe* better for the long term growth of Abigroup than a partial liquidation. That, however, is of little comfort to the *existing* shareholders who get just \$3.90 while the new shareholder reaps *all* of the benefits of future growth. The public shareholders cannot be expected to accept this takeover simply as it is a good investment for Bilfinger Berger! Denied the right to participate in that long term growth, shareholders have the right to expect directors to pursue a short term strategy to maximise current value.

Nevertheless, even if this takeover goes through Abigroup will have been a reasonable investment for us, realising a 71% total return over the last 5¼ years. While that may not be a great return - we probably do not need to remind investors that there were a lot of *worse* places to invest your money in early 1999. Investors who have bought into Abigroup more recently have earned significantly better returns as the shares have

doubled in value over the last year.

Abigroup is at the beginning of an upturn in construction activity and profits should grow strongly over the next few years. So Abigroup shares remain an attractive investment. There is also a possibility that a rival bidder will enter the market - which could start a bidding war. In this situation, the last shareholders to sell out will probably get the best price. At the very least there is a good chance that the current bid will need to be increased to win over the public minority shareholders.

Therefore, do NOT accept the current takeover bid at this stage. If there are any significant developments, requiring action, we shall inform subscribers by email.

AJ Lucas plans to acquire **Stuart Pty**, a company providing building, facilities management and civil engineering services. This acquisition will cost up to \$1.38 million, consisting of the issue of 350,000 new AJ Lucas shares now and up to 250,000 shares (subject to profitability to June 2004) in September 2004. Stuart generates annual revenues of around \$20 million, so is being purchased on a very low Price/Sales ratio of about 0.07. This acquisition requires shareholder approval as two AJ Lucas directors are also directors of Stuart and one has a small financial interest in the company.

This is a relatively small acquisition, but a "strategic" investment for AJ Lucas with "facilities management and maintenance capabilities" skills that the company can apply in other areas of its business to "expedite our strategy of strengthening and diversifying revenue streams".

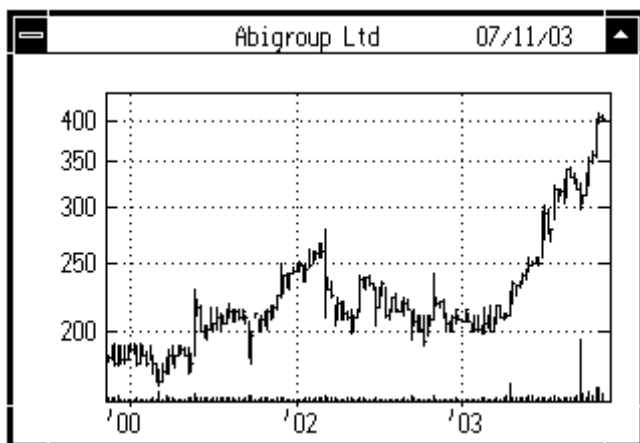
Atlas Pacific had nucleated 194,000 oysters (through to September) of which almost a quarter were for joint ventures. Over 90% of these have been on new oysters, as re-seeding has produced the poorer quality pearls harvested this year. Next year the company expects to nucleate 300,000 new oysters - and has sufficient juvenile oysters at Alyui Bay and other sites, plus sufficient trained technicians to achieve this target.

The Alyui Bay site now specialises on seeding and harvesting. As "costs are largely fixed" the company is seeking to supply the maximum number of juvenile oysters at the cheapest cost from grow-out sites. The grow-out phase requires a large number of relatively unskilled part-time workers on a regular basis, so has been relocated near villages in North Bali and North Maluku. Atlas Pacific is seeking a second grow-out farm in North Bali.

Auspine reports lower sales in the September quarter owing to wet weather which has depressed demand for framing timber in southern states and production interruptions during the commissioning of new production machinery at its *Tarpeena* plant. The second quarter has started well.

Earnings before interest and tax for the December 2003 half year will be down about 17%, but lower interest costs will leave pre-tax profits down about 11%. A tax benefit from new tax consolidation laws is expected to result in the net profit being *above* last year.

Austral Coal reports "very tight" conditions in the international coking coal market owing to "buoyant steel production in North Asia, particularly Mainland China". This situation is expected to continue "throughout 2004 and beyond" (*Continued on Page 6*)



Recommended Investments (Continued from Page 5) and "likely to result in increased coking coal prices". Austral Coal will therefore have no trouble selling its increased production volumes and receive a higher price per tonne.

Australian Infrastructure Fund reports a net asset value of 195 cents at the end of September.

Airports reported strong revenue growth during the September 2003 quarter: Perth up 10.6% (compared with the September 2002 quarter) to \$25.0 million, Melbourne up 13.9% to \$64.9 million and Northern Territory up 31.6% to \$7.5 million. Toll road revenues rose 6.2% to \$20.5 million, while Light Rail revenues dropped 5.7% to \$3.3 million. The drought depressed grain export volumes resulting in lower Port revenues: Portland down 10.8% to \$3.3 million and Geelong down 5.0% to \$3.8 million.

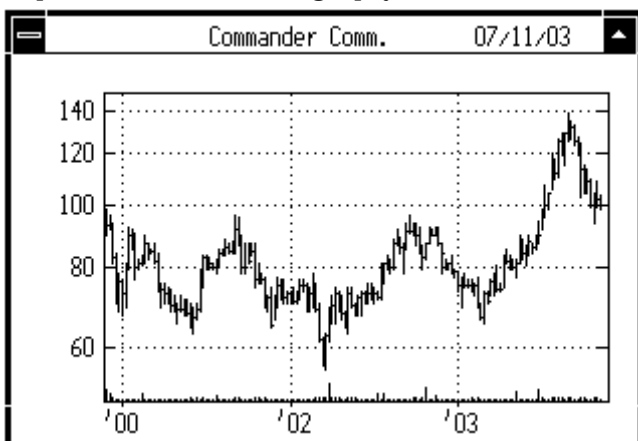
The Port of Geelong will expand with plans for the State Government to build a rail link to Lascelles Wharf. The port company has acquired land adjacent to the wharf and rail head to expand storage facilities.

Commander Communications has released financial projections for the current year which involves the transition of the business. First half revenues are expected to be around \$230 million but generate earnings (before interest, depreciation and amortisation) of just \$6 million and a net loss of about \$2.5 million. The second half should see revenues climb to \$270-285 million with earnings recovering strongly to \$16-18 million.

With the acquisition of RSL, Commander Communications has a *low cost, intelligent virtual telecommunications network* which puts the company in a strong position to compete in the provision of telecommunication services. Its virtual network consists mainly of "intelligent switches" in major cities and other locations allowing it to access the cheapest long distance services from **Telstra** or **Optus** or other network companies. A relatively low \$2-3 million in capital expenditure would allow Commander Communications to expand its network capacity by 30%.

The company's immediate challenge is to successfully market its new telecommunications services. Longer term the company sees growth potential from mobile telecommunications and the growth in broadband services.

Subsidiary **RSL** and **Digiplus** have settled a legal dispute with RSL receiving a payment of \$3.4 million.



Computershare has expanded - and increased its exposure to cyclical stockmarkets - with the US\$115 million cash acquisition of US based **Georgeson Shareholder Communications** from its 70 private shareholders. An additional US\$9 million (in the form of new Computershare shares) will become payable if the company achieves performance goals.

In line with the stockmarket decline, Georgeson Shareholder Communications' revenues have fallen 40% over the last two years to US\$122.0 million for the year to May 2003, but expected to rise about 5% this year. So the business is being purchased on a Price/Sales ratio of about 1.00 - which would appear to be a "bottom of cycle" valuation. No figures for profitability were given but the acquisition "would help earnings per share this financial year" and possibly "requiring a review of previous earnings guidance" given to the market.

The major businesses are Corporate Proxy solicitation (55% market share) including takeovers: Revenue is strongly linked to stockmarket activity, and earned mainly from *per call* charges contacting investors as well as *success fees* on acquisitions, tender offers and proxy fights. Other activities include Post Merger Cleanups (i.e. identifying missing shareholders), Small Shareholder Plans (i.e. buying back small shareholdings) and Financial printing, distribution and mailing.

Georgeson Shareholder Communications has 3500 corporate clients in the US, so there is significant potential for Computershare to use this to expand its core share registry business.

Health Communication Network shares rose strongly last month as subscribers competed to purchase shares in this relatively small company. The volume of shares trading on-market also declined, further compounding the difficulty building up shareholdings. The initial buying rush has now subsided - and general market weakness brought the price back around 126 cents last week. That is 17-21 times this year's expected profits and while not as cheap as some well established businesses we have bought in the past (e.g. Toll Holdings on a P/E of 8, McPhersons on a P/E of 4½) this is not unreasonable for an emerging growth company with an important niche market.

It is difficult to apply valuation criteria to a company that is just emerging into profitability. We can use valuation statistics to avoid paying "blue sky" prices as in the Technology boom, but ultimately our "Buy" decision is based upon the company's unique competitive advantages and the *future profits* that we believe these will be able to generate.

The company's September quarter cashflow statement shows receipts of \$4,895,000 but an operating deficit of \$2,315,000. This reflects the payment to suppliers for a large state government knowledge resource contract, where Heath Communication Network received revenue in the June quarter.

IASbet's share price has suffered over the last month owing to bad press coverage relating to a problem gambler. Since 1998 a **Commonwealth Bank** branch manager, KD Faithfull, has embezzled \$19 million - completely unnoticed and missed by the bank's audits - which was only discovered when he confessed. All of

this money was apparently bet over the internet with IASbet.

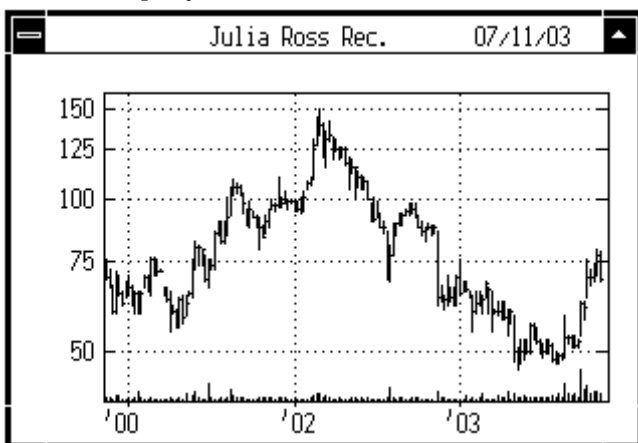
The media clearly paints IASbet as the villain in this story even though Mr Faithfull's defence lawyer points out "the almost seamless transition from social gambler to psychopathological gambler". Not one media report is even mildly critical of the lack of internal controls or ineffective audits at the Commonwealth Bank.

The bottom line, of course, is that the whole gaming industry *depends* upon business from problem gamblers, gambling addicts and people gambling with money that should be spent more responsibly (e.g. feeding their families). TABs, casinos and other providers of gaming services are required to provide oxymoron statements about "responsible gambling" - so no blame for the evils of gambling can fall upon the authorities! If IASbet had refused to accept bets from this customer he would simply have moved his business elsewhere. Another embezzler, charged with stealing \$22 million from **K & S Corporation**, and found guilty of taking \$11.5 million, placed bets with Darwin based but UK owned **Sportingbet Australia** and with its Vanuatu based subsidiary **Number One Betting Shop**.

While the Commonwealth Bank obviously has a serious problem with internal controls and audits, one cannot fault their public relations department. A single employee, acting alone has been able to divert virtually unlimited funds, for over five years and completely unnoticed. It isn't the bank's fault and it isn't the employee's fault. *Someone else* gets the blame!

IASbet's September cash flow statement shows a 35.0% increase in receipts from customers to \$116.2 million although the cash operating surplus fell 55% to \$1,245,000.

We are upgrading **Julia Ross Recruitment** shares from a "Hold" to a "Buy". The start of a recovery in the share price trend has turned the Relative Strength rating *positive*, currently +6.1%, ranked 59. That, together with the low share valuation (i.e. a Price/Sales ratio of 0.27 and a Dividend Yield of 6.5%) plus an *insider* buy over the last year, rates the shares a "Buy" in the *Under-Valued Shares* section of our *Comprehensive Share Selection Criteria*. We agree, and investors can add to existing shareholdings - or establish new holdings - in the company.



Nufarm lifted revenues 2.1% to \$1,458.8 million in the year to 31 July 2003, but profits rose 35.6% to \$77,093,000 (49.4 cents per share) - helped by a \$12,824,000 tax benefit under the new Australian

consolidated tax rules. A final 13.0 cents dividend will lift the annual dividend rate 11.1% to 20.0 cents.

Operating cash flows more than *quadrupled* to a very high \$218.3 million which helped reduce interest bearing debts \$130.9 million to \$480.5 million. That is still a high level of debt compared with Shareholders Equity of \$455.7 million.

The directors are confident of achieving an average 10% profit growth over each of the next three years.

OAMPS share purchase plan was over-subscribed and scaled back. An application for the full 1666 shares being scaled down to 1067 shares.

Unfortunately, not only were application letters "delayed in the post" (or was there some problem at the share registry?) but there were *also* "postal delays" with NZ applications mailed back to Australia - and many applications from NZ investors "arrived after the closing date". This whole situation has been less than satisfactory. The timetable for printing and mailing the applications and the deadline for them to be back at the share registry was far too short. *Our* experience with mailing to Australian subscribers is that the mail takes only about 4-5 days! While it won't help in this situation, we believe that unsuccessful shareholders should send a short letter or email to the OAMPS directors who have failed in their recently stated responsibility to keep "investors both informed and happy".

OAMPS also plans to make a 1 for 4 bonus issue - which doesn't create any value, but divides every existing four shares into five new shares. The shares will trade "ex-entitlement" to this issue from 11 November (and fortunately you won't have to mail anything back to the company to get *these* shares!).

OAMPS has been a very successful investment and the directors have "a positive outlook for the next couple of years", so the shares remain a sound "Hold+" for further gains over at least the next year.

Skilled Engineering expects profits (excluding the non-recurring items) to be steady this year after failing to win any of the **Telstra Access Network** contracts this year. Last year the company performed \$50 million of work for Telstra, but tender prices were significantly lower this year. At those lower prices Skilled Engineering's margins would have been "significantly lower" and it "would not have been able to deliver a quality service". While the stockmarket will no doubt react unfavourably in the short term, turning down unprofitable work is the correct decision and offers Skilled Engineering the opportunity to seek other business where it can earn a profit for shareholders.

A recent High Court decision dealing with superannuation on overtime earnings of casual employees will result in a \$2.5 million non-recurring profit for the company from the reversal of a provision for this cost made in last year's accounts.

Solution 6 sold its **Alpha West** IT services business in a management buyout (MBO) in August 2002 for \$18 million, with \$2.5 million received in cash and \$15.5 million owing as vendor finance. The new owners raised an additional \$2.3 million in equity for working capital. Listed **AIS Corporation** now plans to purchase Alpha West - paying the current MBO investors \$8.9 million in AIS Corporation shares. *(Continued on Page 8)*

Recommended Investments (Continued from Page 7)

To complete this acquisition, AIS Corporation will also need to pay the \$15.5 million owing to Solution 6 and will seek to raise \$8 million through a public share issue and \$7.5 million through a debt facility. Solution 6 is not directly involved in these changes, but is now significantly closer to receiving its \$15.5 million (plus interest) from this earlier sale.

Toll Holdings is learning from its experience in NZ. Institutional investors blocked its full takeover of **Tranz Rail Holdings** (leaving it with 84.2% ownership and some annoying minority shareholders), so the company acquired a 12.0% interest in **Owens Group** to block **Mainfreight's** less than generous takeover. A Mainfreight/Owens Group merger would have been a strong competitor, but Owens Group must now continue

to operate as a separate company while Mainfreight's balance sheet is stretched by the debt used to fund its 79.6% investment in that company.

Toll Holdings reports "earnings well ahead of last year". While Toll Holdings shares remain a sound investment, the share price has risen substantially over the last 8-12 months. Our investment in this company has increased 14½-fold over the last six years - so investors over-weighted in these shares may wish to sell another 25-35% to help finance investments in recent new recommendations. "Hold-".

UXC has acquired Queensland based **Lanlink Pty** which will be merged with its existing voice, data and IP business communications subsidiary **Integ Communications**.

(Continued on Page 20)

Share Recommendation: Buy Technology One

(This section is in Australian currency, unless stated.)

BUY Australian listed Technology One (code TNE).

During the Technology boom of 1999/2000 these shares traded on a Price/Sales ratio of 16, a Price/Earnings ratio of 80 and a Yield of just 0.3%. Although Technology One is a high quality growth company, such high valuations can only result in losses to investors. The Technology sector has since fallen out of favour and - owing to a decline in the share price *plus* the growth in revenues, profit and dividends - investors can now buy Technology One shares at just 10-20% of that earlier valuation!

Just as importantly, Technology One has spent the last three years investing heavily in Research & Development, building customer relationships and improving its competitive advantage relative to its much larger global software competitors. Over the next two years Technology One plans to take the product leadership position in its industry - with the potential for significant growth in market share and an explosive increase in revenues and profits!

Company History

Technology One was formed in 1987 to provide accounting software to small and medium sized businesses. By the time the company listed on the Australian stockmarket in late 1999 its main software products were *Finance One* (i.e. financial management and accounting software for *large* companies), *People One*, (i.e. payroll and human resources software), *Student One* (i.e. student administration software for universities and other educational institutions) and was close to finalising *Retail One* (i.e. software for large retailers which was launched in July 2000).

A public share issue in November 1999 at 33.3 cents per share (adjusted for a 3:1 share split a year later) raised 27.85 million. \$16.0 million (57%) of this went to

existing shareholders who also retained a 72% shareholding in the company. A share placement at 134.3 cents (adjusted for the subsequent share split) raised an additional \$18.0 million for the company in October 2000.

In December 2000, **Proclaim Software** was acquired for around \$10.6 million, financed about 80% in cash from the recent placement and 20% by the issue of new shares. Proclaim Software was a leading provider of software to local government.

Technology One also provides custom software development for companies and government departments.

Recent Results

Unlike other Technology companies that ventured into new areas during the boom (and then re-trenched), Technology One has remained focused upon its core business which continues to grow and remains very profitable, generates strong cash flows and allows the company to pay high dividends! Unlike competitors, Technology One has continued to invest heavily in Research & Development (which is fully expensed) and is steadily gaining market share. The company has a strong balance sheet, with high cash reserves and virtually no interest bearing debt.

In the year to June 2000 (i.e. its first as a listed company), revenues rose 46.4% to \$28.7 million while profits rose 55.9% to \$5,750,000 (1.9 cents per share, adjusted for the 3:1 share split) and paid a dividend of 0.5 cents. The cash operating surplus rose 40% to \$5.5 million.

For the year to June 2001, revenues increased 39.1% to \$40.0 million. Profits rose another 35.1% to \$7,767,000 (2.4 cents per share) and the annual dividend was raised 184.0% to 1.42 cents (plus a special 0.95 cents

November 11, 2003.

dividend was paid). The operating cash surplus was steady at \$5.6 million.

Revenues grew by only 17.1% to \$47.4 million in the year to June 2002. Profits grew a similar 12.7% to \$8,755,000 (2.8 cents per share) and the dividend was increased 40.8% to 2.0 cents per share. The cash surplus from operations rose 22% to \$6.8 million.

The year to June 2003 saw revenues continue to rise - up 2.0% to \$48.4 million - but profits fell 19.7% to \$7,030,000 (2.4 cents per share). The dividend continued to increase, up 25.0% to 2.5 cents, while the cash operating surplus improved 40% to \$9.6 million.

The lower profitability in the latest period reflects higher costs as the company (1) opened new regional offices to improve service to clients and (2) increased Research & Development. Technology One is developing major upgrades to all of its products under the brand *Connected Intelligence* that will run under **Microsoft Corporation's** .Net platform and provide significant improvements.

Competitive Advantage

Technology One is a relatively small company competing against many significantly larger international software companies. Major competitors include **Oracle** (with worldwide revenues 200 times larger than Technology One), **SAP** (revenues 150 times greater), **Peoplesoft** (revenues 40 times higher), **Epicor**, **Systems Union**, **GEAC** and **JD Edwards**. Nevertheless, Technology One believes it has important competitive advantages:

Over the last four years, Technology One has increased its revenues by over 140%, while its best competitors, SAP and Systems Union, have managed less than 50% growth. Epicor's revenues have fallen almost 50%.

Over the same period, Technology One has increased its annual Research & Development expenditure 250% to further improve its products to seek future growth. Competitors' R&D expenditure have remained relatively steady (i.e. within a range of plus or minus 40%).

Technology One also has succeeded in growing profits. Software is a business with significant economies of scale - so the largest companies should be the most profitable. Yet Technology One has achieved high profit margins of around 15-20%, despite spending a very high 20% of revenues on Research & Development.

Technology One also believes its business structure is a competitive advantage. It is the only company in this sector to *develop and market, install and support* its own products. All of the other software vendors sell through third parties. So Technology One assumes complete responsibility for software and builds closer relationships with its customers.

Competitors weak relationships with clients is expected to lead to significant market share gains for Technology One from 2005 when organisations look to replace 4-5 year old systems purchased ahead of the Y2K boom. Technology One believes that many competitors "over promised and under delivered" and customers will therefore look for new software suppliers.

Technology One has invested heavily in its new *Connected Intelligence* software to enable it to "take a product leadership position over competitors" over the

next 6-24 months. This new *Connected Intelligence* software will "combine client server and Internet to connect customers, suppliers, staff and managers, connect disparate systems across multiple IT platforms and across multiple organisations". It will also be "easily deployed via the Internet or intranet, have a rich powerful user interface that is very simple and easy to use without training or experience".

Connected Intelligence upgrades will be progressively released to minimise risks and control Research & Development expenditure: *Finance One CI* will be released in mid-2004, *Retail One CI* in mid-2005, *People One CI* in mid-2005, *Proclaim One CI* in mid to late 2005 and *Student One CI* in late 2005.

Apart from acquiring Proclaim Software three years ago Technology One has avoided acquisitions and industry consolidation. Consolidation is an important feature of a boom/bust cycle to remove *excessive competition* from the market and to enable companies to achieve economies of scale through increased market share. Technology One, however, sees little point in acquiring "overlapping products", that "acquisitions do not necessarily deliver long term benefits to either shareholders or clients" and that the "consolidation phase will substantially reduce the effectiveness of many of our competitors".

Technology One believes that "future growth will be driven by customers replacing their existing systems" and that success or failure in this industry will depend upon "who will keep their customers and who will lose them". Technology One's strategy is to have the best software, the best relationships with customers and the best support. So Technology One has avoided acquisitions for short term gain but invested heavily in Research & Development to enable it to have the best software products over the next few years and expanded its branches to further raise its level of client support.

All of this investment in R&D and branch expansion has been funded from revenues (and expensed, not capitalised) while the company has maintained high profit margins!

The payoff from successfully implementing this growth strategy to Technology One could therefore be huge. Market share (and revenues and profits) would increase rapidly in Australia and NZ and other (currently small) Asian markets. Beyond 2005 the company is considering expansion in the United Kingdom and expansion of its software services to cover Professional Services businesses and Asset Intensive industries.

Quite possibly, however, Technology One will find itself on the receiving end of a hostile takeover bid from a competitor seeking to acquire the Intellectual Property rights to its software and market it internationally. Subscribers may remember how **JNA Telecommunications** developed a better data/voice switch for telecommunication networks and sought a partner to market it internationally. **Lucent Technology** liked the product so much, they made a takeover bid for the whole company which realised a significant capital gain on our investment!

On-Market Share Buy-Backs

In July 2002, Technology One (Continued on Page 10)

Buy Technology One (Continued from Page 9) announced an on-market buy-back for up to 31,775,179 shares (10% of its capital). Over the year it acquired and cancelled 19,679,092 shares (6.25%) for \$4.9 million (i.e. an average cost of 25.1 cents per share). A new on-market share buy-back for up to 29,849,598 shares (10%) was announced in August 2003.

Investment Criteria

Technology One is a high quality growth company. Revenues have increased steadily, the business earns very high profit margins and strong cashflows, the company continues to invest heavily in Research & Development so is well placed for future growth *and* it pays a high cash dividend to its shareholders.

At 44 cents, the shares trade on a Price/Sales ratio of 2.72, a Price/Earnings ratio of 19 and a Dividend Yield of 5.7%.

The P/S ratio is relatively high, but justifiable owing to the high profit margin of 15-20% - which is *after* spending 19% of revenues on Research & Development and additional amounts to expand branches ahead of expected future growth.

A P/E ratio of 19 is slightly below the average of all listed Australian companies, yet Technology One is a potential *super stock* that could experience significant revenue and profit growth over many years and generate outstanding returns for investors.

The high dividend yield of 5.7% and the 100% payout ratio makes this look more like a mature company with no growth potential for re-invested profits. In fact, the high dividend probably simply reflects the large cash holding, strong balance sheet, fairly reliable cashflows and profits, as well as the directors belief in future growth.

Technology One has cash and interest bearing investments of \$20.2 million (6.8 cents per share), with less than \$1.1 million in interest bearing debt. Shareholders Equity is just \$35.6 million (11.9 cents per share), but this is not a capital intensive business and its most valuable assets (i.e. intellectual property rights, client relationships, skilled staff) have no monetary value in the balance sheet.

The issued capital is 298,495,976 shares giving the company a market capitalisation of \$131 million. This makes Technology One a *medium sized* business. Although management own 60% of the company, the shares are very actively traded in large volumes (i.e. around 75,000 to 500,000 shares daily), so should be quite easy to acquire.

The shares are relatively *neglected* by brokers, with just four firms following the company closely enough to publish profit forecasts. The consensus is that profits will rise about 16% in 2004 and 22% in 2005. Other analysts and brokers do not share our view on the potential of Technology One and, seeing nothing special in the company, rate the shares "fairly valued" and a "Hold". Institutional investors also have little interest and have sold down their holdings to own only about 15% of the company.

Directors have a significant interest in Technology One. Director and founding shareholder, J Mactaggart, still retains 83,902,500 shares (28.1% of the company).

The other founding shareholder, A Di Marco, is the Executive Chairman (i.e. Chief Executive *and* Chairman of the board) and holds 78,372,500 shares (26.3% of the company). Chief Operating Officer R McLean owns 400,000 shares and non-executive director S Larwill has 200,000 shares. Other management and staff own a further 5.5% of Technology One, taking the total ownership by the directors, management and staff to over 60% and resulting in "a very strong alignment between the interests of staff and shareholders".

Technology One shares listed at a significant premium following their initial public offering and peaked at 164 cents in late 2000 before dropping to a low of 21 cents in late 2002. Since then, the shares have started to recover strongly. The Relative Strength rating is +14.4%, ranked 41, indicating that the shares are in an uptrend and appreciating faster than most other listed shares.

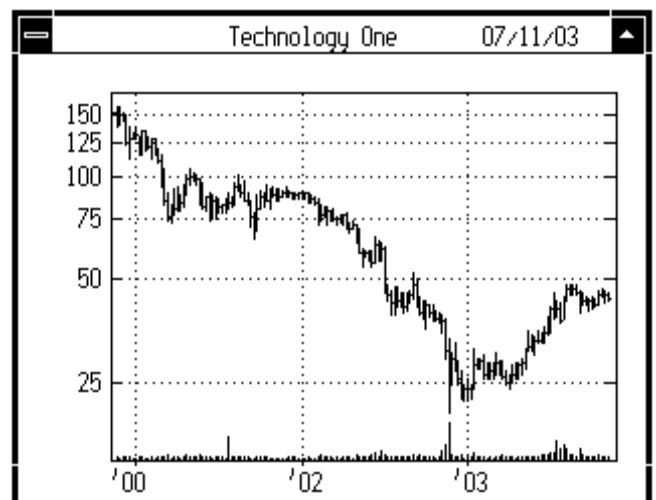
Summary and Recommendation

Technology One has always been a quality company, but traded at a high valuation during the Technology boom. The decline in the share price during 2001 and 2002 - *plus* the growth in revenues, profits and dividends over that period - has created good value in the shares.

Technology One has also invested heavily to take a *product leadership position* and to build a competitive advantage in client relationships and service. The company is therefore well positioned to realise substantial gains in market share over the next several years - which would yield significant revenue and profit growth.

This company is not without risk - but appears to have built a strong competitive advantage within its sector, a very profitable business with strong cashflows and holds large cash reserves. So although Technology One is smaller than its competitors it appears to have the product, corporate structure, customers and financial resources needed to achieve its future growth goals.

Technology One shares offer a high current income yield, which will make them more attractive to retired investors than many other low-yielding growth shares. Despite this high income, we mainly see this as an emerging growth company for investors seeking maximum capital appreciation. The shares have the potential to appreciate 4-6 fold in value over the next 5 years and perhaps 15-30 fold over the next decade (i.e. a compound rate of growth of 30-40% per annum).



Share Recommendation: Sell Biron Capital

(This section is in Australian currency, unless stated.)

We are recommending the sale of shares in **Biron Capital** - mainly owing to concerns over its mezzanine finance business. The company's annual result to 30 June 2003 disclosed two large "past due" loans totalling \$6,825,000 or 61% of its loan portfolio.

The quarterly cashflow report to 30 September suggests this situation has not improved: Loan repayments totalled only \$1.5 million for the quarter which would indicate the company has failed to recover any of the principal of these two problem loans.

"Property finance and associated receipts" which approximately equals revenues for this business was just \$277,074 for the quarter. For the June 2003 year Biron Capital reported annual receipts of \$2,055,934 and accounting revenues \$2,481,000. The difference between these figures results from the timing of cashflows. So the September quarter receipts are well down on the \$500,000 to \$600,000 that could be expected.

Furthermore, "net operating cash flows" is an indication of profitability. For the June 2003 year, net cashflows were \$1,078,342 while accounting profits were \$1,385,000. For the September 2003 quarter the company has reported a cash operating deficit of \$204,652. In addition to the lower income, staff costs and "interest and other costs of finance" have increased. As Biron Capital is lending its own money, interest costs are nil, so "other costs of finance" may indicate legal and other costs of the "significant enforcement action" being taken to recover the overdue loans.

In other words, as a result of the two problem loans, interest income is well down while operating costs (i.e. presumably to recover these loans) has increased and the company appears to be trading unprofitably.

Of course, hopefully Biron Capital will eventually recover these loans, secured by second mortgages and other guarantees, in full. If so, cash flow and profitability will be boosted by interest (which has not been taken into account on overdue loans) as well as default fees. Nevertheless, having most of the finance portfolio invested in problem loans is not the ideal way to run this business. At best it will depress short term profitability (and the share price) while at worst could result in a significant loss of Shareholder Equity and even bankrupt the company. Risks (as well as potential profits) will increase as the company plans to expand its finance portfolio with \$10 million in short term borrowings.

Our Investment in Biron

Needless to say, *overall* our 9½ year investment in Biron has not been a great success - but that is only part of the story.

We were initially attracted to this company owing to its niche market in producing created emeralds and the high profit margins, high profits and strong cashflows this business produced. Although Biron was a *low cost producer* - and further lowered its unit cost by doubling

production and reducing total costs - it was hit by competition and falling prices. Much of the competition came from Russian production, seeking foreign exchange earnings rather than sustainable profitability. The growth in demand for created emeralds in jewellery also appears to have quickly peaked and then declined. In 2001 the company sold this business and went into property finance. Biron made a 1 for 2 cash issue at 35 cents in early 2002 but we advised against increasing investments in the company and instead sold the rights for a small amount.

What Can We Learn from this Unsuccessful Investment?

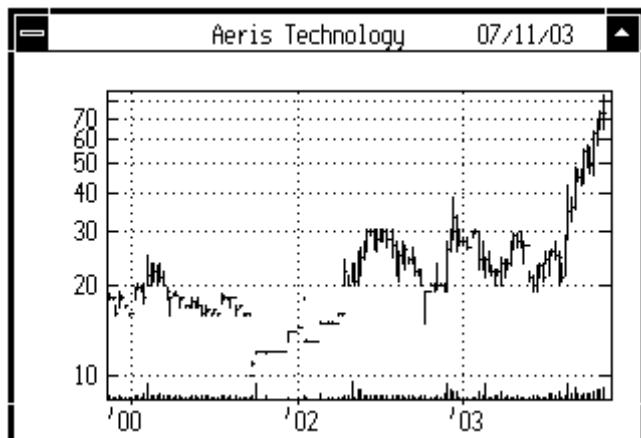
Firstly, we still look for companies which, like Biron, have a leading position in a niche market. We still look for companies that are profitable, generate strong cash flows and pay dividends. We still look for companies that can *increase* production volumes and *lower* operating costs to *improve their competitive position* in the market. These are still favourable characteristics to look for in an investment. Unfortunately, while some niche markets expand and grow, others will decline. In 1943, the Chairman of IBM estimated a worldwide demand for "about five computers". Today it is no easier to estimate the eventual market for a new product or service. So we can look for companies with characteristics important for success - but can never completely eliminate the risk of significant loss. This is simply a fact of stockmarket investment and the reason we diversify our portfolio so widely.

Secondly, Biron helped teach us to be more cautious about the sustainability of high profit margins. The experience with Biron has long ago helped evolve our share selection methods to give significantly greater emphasis to the importance of a *low Price/Sales ratio*. High profit margins result in high P/S ratios, so by being more cautious of high P/S ratio shares we can avoid many situations like Biron where high profit margins prove to be unsustainable. We formulated our *Comprehensive Share Selection Criteria* in 1997 which has been responsible for a significant improvement in the profitability of our share recommendations over recent years.

Thirdly, Biron has re-affirmed the importance of being a *share investor*, not a *newsletter publisher* (or an analyst or a stockbroker). Our investment in Biron lost 93% of its value in the first three years dropping to a low of 11½ cents in early 1997. Most advisers will simply "conveniently forget" such investments or recommend their sales - for the sole purpose of removing an embarrassment from their Recommended Portfolio which would make it more difficult to sell newsletter subscriptions! But selling the shares may or may not be the right decision. In this case, holding these shares was the correct *investment* decision *(Continued on Page 12)*

\$1.4 million in cash.

Our current advice? With little or no revenues this situation is still very speculative, so anyone sitting on a significant gain on the options would do well to realise all or most of these options and take a big cash payout!



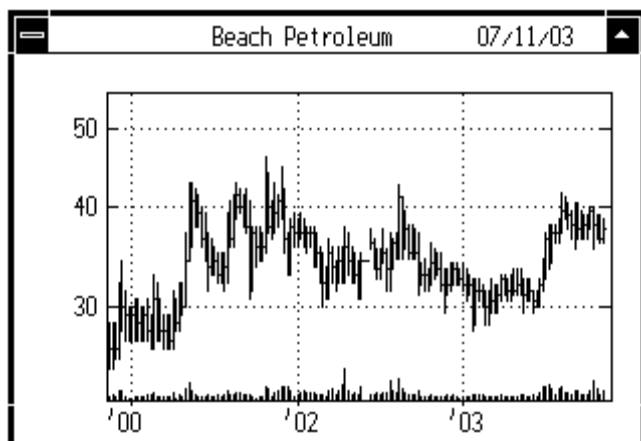
Beach Petroleum (codes BPT and BPTOA).

We first reviewed Beach Petroleum options (to buy shares at 33½ cents on 31 May 2005) in our August 2003 survey.

Over the last quarter the shares have dipped 5.0% to 38 cents and the options are down 16.0% to 10½ cents.

The company has raised \$34 million in new capital through the placement of 52 million shares at 33 cents and a share purchase plan, also at 33 cents.

These options are actively traded (so easy to purchase), are “in the money” (i.e. the shares trade slightly above the options exercise price) with 18½ months until their final exercise date. The warrant leverage has increased to a very high 3.58 times. All of this adds up to an attractive speculative investment, so if Beach Petroleum shares perform well over the next year and a half, then the options will produce a high return to investors.



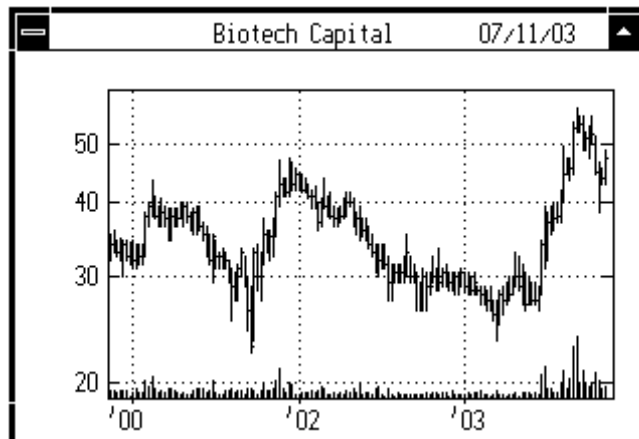
Biotech Capital (codes BTC and BTCOA).

Biotech Capital is a biotechnology investment company with interests in seven unlisted companies, an investment in listed **Clinical Cell Culture** and \$11.8 million (14.7 cents per share) in cash.

The options (to buy shares on 10 October 2006 at 55 cents) are slightly “out of the money” (i.e. the exercise price is *above* the current share price) and trade at a small discount to *fair value* to offer a fairly high leverage

of 2.48 times. The *Break-Even rate* is relatively low at 11%, so if the shares can appreciate at greater than 11% per annum over the next 35 months then the options will start to rapidly grow in value.

With the upturn in the stockmarket and improved sentiment towards Biotechnology companies this could be an attractive sector in which to hold a small investment. In a speculative sector, options can be particularly attractive as they offer an exposure to the company at only 20% of the cost of buying the shares directly.



Datafast Telecommunications (codes DFT and DTFOA).

An investment in this \$17.5 million micro-cap company must involve significant risks, but Datafast appears to be recovering and rapidly expanding its Internet Service Provider (ISP) business, buying up *customers* of other ISPs and consolidating this industry.

For the year to June 2003 Datafast Telecommunications generated revenues of \$15.2 million but recorded a loss of \$4,334,000. That, however, was *after* goodwill amortisation and the write-down in intangible assets values of \$5,396,000. So before those non-cash, accounting items there was a profit of \$1,062,000 (0.13 cents per share).

The September cashflow report shows receipts rising steadily to \$3,865,000 and continued operating *cash surpluses* up to \$120,000.

Cash on hand is \$601,000 but Datafast has interest bearing debts of \$820,000. Creditors of \$3.8 million also exceed debtors of \$1.3 million. So this is a *tight* financial situation, but the cash keeps coming in fast enough to pay the creditors *and* buy up another ISP every couple of months.

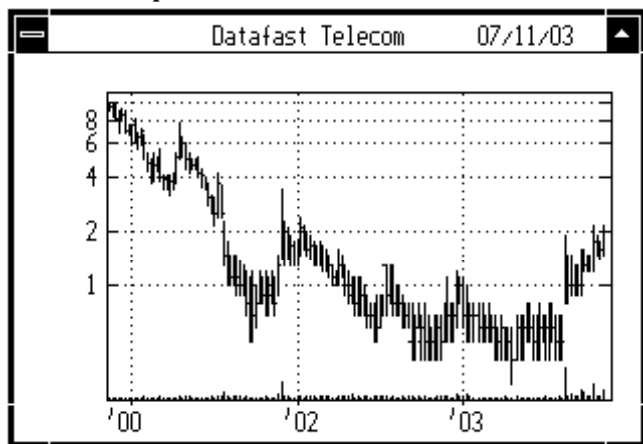
The November 2005 options to buy shares at 20 cents (code DFTO) will probably expire worthless - so forget about them.

The 10 January 2005 options to buy shares at 1 cent (code DFTOA) offer an attractive speculation. The ordinary shares trade at 2 cents and appear to be in a new uptrend, with a Relative Strength rating of +83.1%, ranked 4. This makes them one of the *very strongest* shares listed on the Australian stockmarket. The DFTOA options last traded at 0.8 cents - a 45% discount to *fair value* - and investors should be able to easily buy them on-market at 1.0 cent (i.e. a couple of investors are currently offering 3.5 million (Continued on Page 18)

Warrant/Option Analysis *(Continued from Page 17)*

The options have 14 months to their final exercise date. If Datafast shares remain steady at 2 cents, then the options will be worth 1 cent (i.e. unchanged in value) at that date. If the shares appreciate to around 4-5 cents then the options would increase 3-4 fold to 3-4 cents.

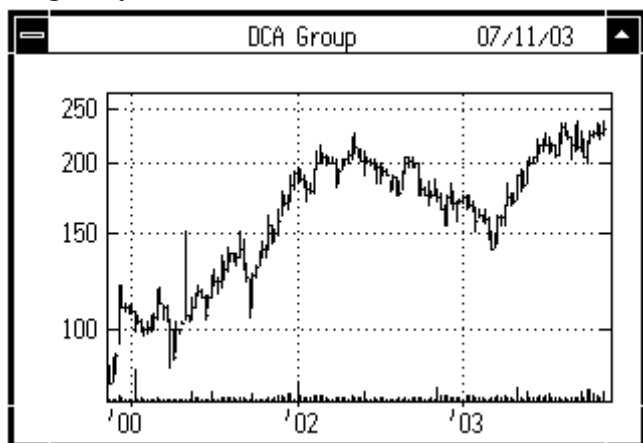
The company's positive cashflows plus improving sentiment to Technology companies makes this a reasonable speculation.



DCA Group (code DVC and DVCO).

DCA Group options (to buy shares at 235 cents on 30 September 2005) were reviewed in our last quarterly survey. The share price is virtually unchanged (i.e. down 1 cent) at 231 cents but the options have risen 30% to 32 cents. This increase reflects the fact that the options were *extremely* under-valued (i.e. at 49% below fair value) in August and are now only *very* under-valued (i.e. 29% below fair value).

The options offer very high leverage, 3.34 times, so remain an attractive speculative investment. The options trade in fairly good volumes, albeit a bit irregularly.



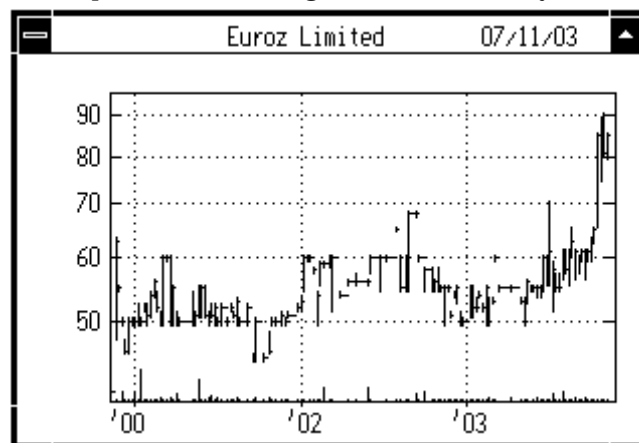
Euroz (codes EZL and EZLO).

The November 2004 options (to buy shares at 50 cents) of this small stockbroking firm have been featured as an "investment quality" option in each of our quarterly surveys since May 2002 when they traded around 9½ cents. A year ago the options dipped back to trade around 6½ cents but have recently soared as high as 40 cents.

Stockbroking is, of course, a cyclical business - so the

recent upturn in the stockmarket should have a big impact upon Euroz's revenues and profits. In anticipation of this, the share price has increased about 50% over recent months - with the highly leveraged options soaring many-fold in value.

Despite the increase in share and option prices, the options still offer a high leverage (i.e. will fluctuate in value 2.1 times more than the shares) and stockbroking is an attractive investment sector at this stage of the stockmarket cycle. So the options remain an attractive investment. Investors sitting on a large gain may wish to realise partial profits, but we will continue to hold these options for further gains over the next year.



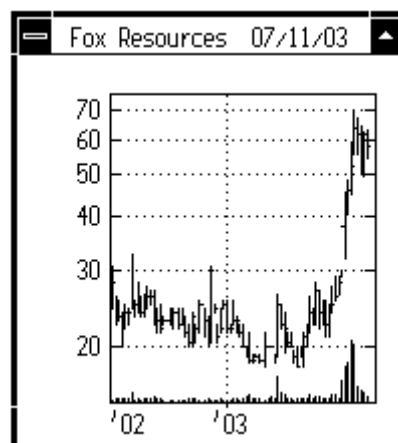
Fox Resources (codes FXR and FXRO).

In May 2003 we featured this small, speculative company that is seeking to re-open the **Radio Hill** nickel mine. The shares traded at 22 cents and the January 2006 options (to buy shares at 20 cents) traded at 5-6½ cents - half of their fair value.

The company's mineral exploration to find additional ore appears to have been successful and the company plans to start producing metal from mid-2004. As a result the share price has risen 2½-fold to 58 cents and the options are up 7-9 fold at 44 cents!

At current prices the options are *fairly valued* and offer little leverage (i.e. just 1.27 times).

Even as a nickel *producer* this company will be speculative. It is therefore appropriate for investors to sell these options and realise a significant capital gain. Investors wishing to maintain an interest in Fox Resources should also sell all of their options and re-invest a small amount in the shares. This will minimise the future risks.



Magna Pacific (codes MPH and MPHOB).

We first featured the February 2004 options (to buy shares at 32 cents) in this "rapidly growing business producing DVDs" in our August 2002 survey when they traded around 3.4 cents - although at that stage they were very under-valued and inactively traded but "worth buying if you can pick some up".

Three months later the shares were up 24% at 41 cents and the options up 179% to 9½ cents - but trading in much larger quantities - so we again featured the options which were "still very attractive". The shares now trade at 55 cents and the options at 21½ cents. So the options have increased 6-fold since we first reviewed them and better than *doubled* since November 2002 when larger volumes became available on-market.

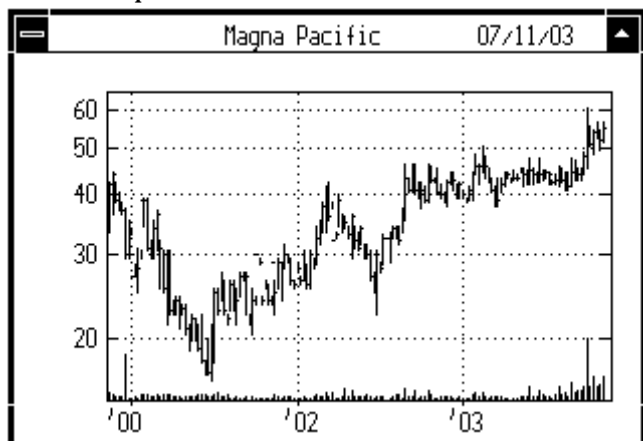
Over the last three months the company has issued 9.0 million new shares at 38 cents to **Thorney Holdings** to raise \$3.42 million, plus issued 9.0 million options at 2 cents with an exercise price of 48 cents in December 2005 (to potentially raise a further \$4.5 million).

The listed options are now approaching their final exercise date of 28 February 2004 so within the next 3½ months we need to decide whether to (1) sell the options on market (to realise their value) or (2) to exercise them by paying 32 cents to buy shares and *continue* our investment in Magna Pacific.

On the *positive* side, Magna Pacific is a rapidly growing business so our initial thoughts were that this could be a good growth investment. There are, however, a few *negative* factors. Firstly, issued capital will increase 84% with the exercise of the listed options in February - which will dilute earnings per share growth. Of course, Magna Pacific has significant cash reserves and will receive another \$15 million from the exercise of the options - so has cash for expansion or an acquisition. Therefore it is surprising that the company has recently issued further new shares to Thorney at a substantial discount to market price - effectively transferring shareholder wealth from *existing* investors to a new investor. The shares and options issued to Thorney will result in an even larger *increase* in the issued capital, so even greater dilution in earnings per share.

Earnings per share were 3.05 cents for the year to 30 June 2003, so at 55 cents the shares are trading at a Price/Earnings ratio of 18.

With massive *dilution* from the exercise of the existing options and the issue of discounted shares to an outside shareholder our current view is that we shall probably sell these options on-market over the next 3½ months.



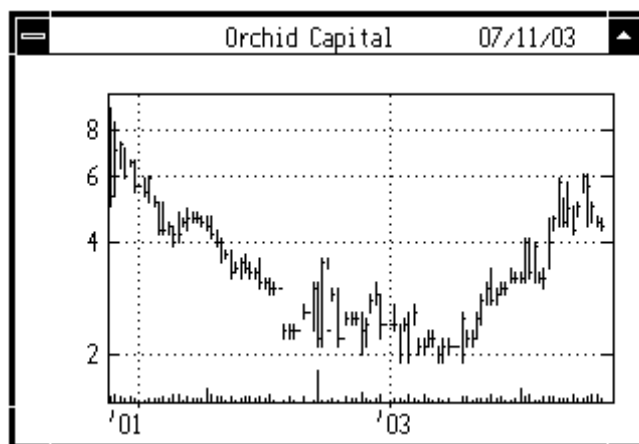
probably in January or early February. The shares are currently in an uptrend, so we shall let our profits run for now and will keep subscribers informed of developments.

Orchid Capital (codes ORC and ORCO).

This is a struggling investment company with its main asset being about \$7 million in cash. Net asset backing is 6.19 cents per share.

We reviewed the company briefly in August, and since then the share price has increased 37% to 4.4 cents while the options have *doubled* to 1.7 cents.

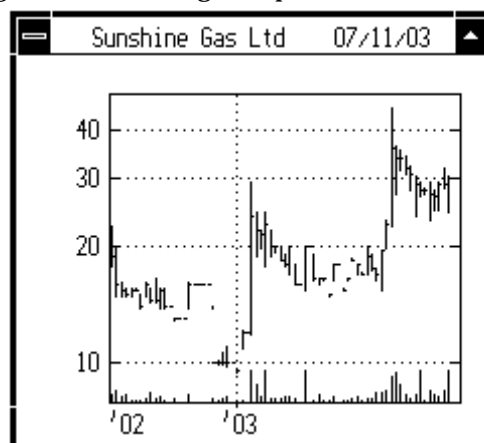
We still don't know what the company may do with its cash to create shareholder wealth in the future, but the options still have over three years until their final exercise date. So this is a speculative, long term investment that is worth consideration.

**Sunshine Gas** (codes SHG and SHGO).

We first featured these options (to buy shares at 20 cents in June 2004) in our February 2003 review. This was a "very speculative investment" in a risky exploration company but attractive owing to the very small initial investment (i.e. 5½ cents to buy an option) to participate in any success in the company's exploration.

The shares spiked to a high of 45 cents in early August. With exploration companies it is better to take profits at some stage - rather than wait for the *long term* returns which are usually negative. We sold our options at 12 cents and they later peaked at 15 cents.

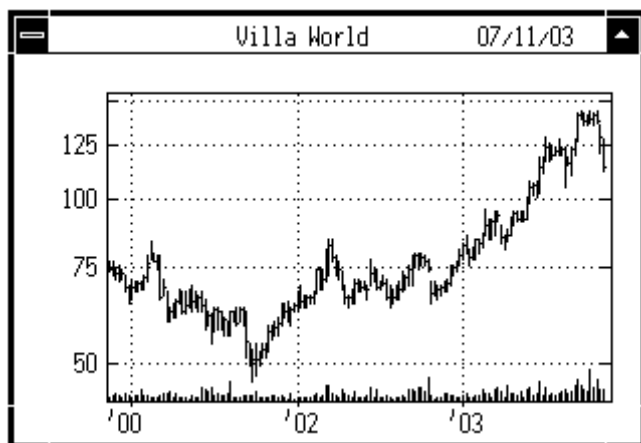
The options currently trade around 9½ cents and have about 7½ months until their final exercise date. For investors holding these options, we would favour selling on rallies during that period.



Recommended Investments (Continued from Page 8)

Villa World shares have been marked down sharply over the last month as investors *over-anticipate* the end of the housing boom as a result of a slight rise in Australian interest rates.

Nevertheless, Villa World expects the market to remain buoyant - and we agree. "A small increase in profit" is forecast this financial year, with the dividend "maintained or slightly increased" from last year's 11.0 cents. In addition, the company has a good spread of medium term to long term projects that offer reasonably steady profits and growth. The shares offer a very high Dividend Yield so remain a "Hold".



Vision Systems expects continued start-up losses from its Biosystems instruments business for the half year to December 2003, a break-even in the second half of the year and a "strong 2005 financial year". Novocastra which "will be profitable and more than cover the instrument business losses" is also developing new antibody and reagent products which will be released "before March". The Fire & Security division is expected to produce strong growth.

In the short term the company is under-performing earlier expectations, resulting in the current weakness in the share price. The business, however, has the potential for significant revenue and profit growth with the release of its own brand of automated cancer testing instruments and recurring, high margin reagent sales.

Dividend\$

Company	Cents per Share	Ex-Date	Pay-able	Tax Credit
Calan Healthcare Properties	1.8019	08-12	19-12	0.1981
DB Breweries	20.50	24-11	03-12	-
Fletcher Building	10.00	27-10	13-11	Full
Hallenstein Glasson	9.50	08-12	15-12	Full
Infratil NZ	5.00	24-11	28-11	Full
Kirkcaldie & Stains	11.00	08-12	15-12	Nil
Powerco	7.20	08-12	19-12	Nil
Property For Industry	1.35	03-11	07-11	0.30
Restaurant Brands	4.50	10-11	21-11	Full
Scott Technology	8.00	01-12	04-12	Full
Steel & Tube Holdings (special)	10.0	10-11	21-11	Full
Trust Power	17.00	08-12	19-12	Full
Urbus Properties	3.6225	10-11	21-11	0.08775
Australian Shares				
Abigroup	4.00	27-10	14-11	
AJ Lucas Group	4.50	25-11	16-12	
IASbet	2.50	16-09	06-10	
Nufarm	13.00	20-10	07-11	
UXC	3.00	30-10	21-11	
Villa World	6.00	27-10	14-11	

Total Return Index for All Listed Shares

Oct 6	1919.63		
Oct 7	1930.58		
Oct 8	1938.53		
Oct 9	1938.24		
Oct 10	1939.87		
Oct 13	1942.73	Oct 20	1949.02
Oct 14	1939.59	Oct 21	1953.96
Oct 15	1937.79	Oct 22	1947.67
Oct 16	1942.05	Oct 23	1940.09
Oct 17	1946.26	Oct 24	1950.86
Oct 27	Holiday	Nov 3	1965.22
Oct 28	1951.93	Nov 4	1956.19
Oct 29	1962.38	Nov 5	1965.13
Oct 30	1959.33	Nov 6	1956.93
Oct 31	1965.34	Nov 7	1951.34

Current Issues

BONUS ISSUES

	Ratio	Ex-Date
Scott Technology	1:8	01-12

SHARE REPURCHASES

	Details
NGC Holdings	1 in 3, off-market at 184 cents
NZ Experience	34%, on-market at 25 cents

Next Issue

The next issue of *Market Analysis* will be posted in four weeks time on Tuesday December 9, 2003 (and delivered in most areas on Wednesday 10).

Subscribers who have updated their account online with an e-mail address will also receive the Electronic version in their e-mail Tuesday morning.

MARKET ANALYSIS is published 12 times per year by Securities Research Company Limited, P.O. Box 34-162, Birkenhead, Auckland. (66 Stanaway Street. Telephone 64-9-4199 427 Facsimile 64-9-4199 428 Internet: www.stockmarket.co.nz or www.australia-stockmarket.com Email: james@stockmarket.co.nz). Subscription Rate NZ\$265 (including GST) per year.

Readers are advised that they should not assume that every recommendation made in the future will be profitable or equal the performance of recommendations made in the past. A summary of All prior recommendations is available to any current subscriber, free of charge, upon request. The information presented has been obtained from original and published sources believed to be reliable, but its accuracy cannot be guaranteed. The entire contents are copyright. Reproduction in whole or part is strictly forbidden.