



"Sharing real experiences from decades of profitable trading. Focusing on the important factors that lead to trading success."

Factor Update, June 25, 2017

Market Review

New candidate Factor Moves™ (trading set-up) are developing in:

- European bank stocks
- EuroSwiss (interest rate)

Candidate Factor Moves™ are currently ongoing in:

- *Portugal ETF (PGAL)

This issue also comments on EUR/USD, German Schatz, U.S. stock indexes, New Zealand Dollar, Financial Select Sector (XLF), energy markets, Singapore Index, *Canadian Dollar, *German Schatz, grain markets and *Kospi (and EWY-etf). *Signifies a position in the Factor \$100,000 Tracking Account

<p><u>Developing signals</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EuroSwiss – entry order and protective stop • Russell (probably ETF) – alert • Singapore Index – entry order and protective stop 	<p><u>Existing positions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PGAL – protective stops and targets • EWY – protective stop • Canadian Dollar – protective stop and target • German Schatz
<p>The Factor Tracking Account is currently leveraged at 1.8X. The margin-to-equity use for futures and forex is 2.3%.</p>	

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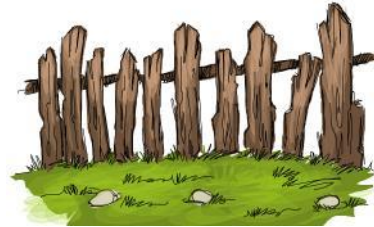
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My 2017 trading year in pictures



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I hate playing defense. I absolutely dread it. The Factor Service began in Jan 2014. I so appreciate that the renewal rate among the original members of the Factor Service remains at a consistent 80% level. Your loyalty to what I am attempting to accomplish through the Factor Service is appreciated more than I can express.

The Factor Tracking Account began in Jun 2014. From inception through Dec 2016 the Factor Tracking Account achieved consistent trading outcomes, thanks to some wonderful market trends launched by well-defined classical chart construction. Responsive markets continued through the first week of Jan, then, as the saying goes, the "dung hit the fan."

I run the risk of coming across as making an excuse for the lack of recent profitability in discussing the challenging markets I have faced in 2017. This is not my intent. I take complete and full responsibility for my trading performance – both the good and the bad. It is my sincere hope that a continued discussion of these challenging market conditions will be instructive ... perhaps even encouraging.

There is no doubt that some trading approaches have performed wonderfully in 2017. I have an asset allocation to a CTA who is experiencing an incredible year. Good markets for one trader can be terrible markets for another trader. This is why we call it "market speculation." The reality is that the combination of my trade identification, trade entry signaling and trade management are out of synch with market behavior. It is not any more complicated than that.

There is nothing like difficult trading conditions to drag a trader into a world of introspection (even doubt). When an approach is working the tendency is for a trader to believe favorable trading conditions will last forever. When an approach is not working it is can be difficult for a trader to even remember what the good times were like. Welcome to the world of market speculation. Faced with difficult trading conditions I have considered several options.

1. Downsize, downsize, downsize
2. Discontinue all trading until favorable trading conditions reappear
3. Make whatever changes to my trading approach are necessary until I find something that works

4. Make slight trading modifications to adjust to current trading conditions without fundamentally altering what has historically worked
5. Become much more highly selective of trade signals
6. Keep plugging along with greatly downsized risk until markets return to more normal conditions

I am adopting a combination of #1, #4, #5 and #6 above – with a strong emotional temptation to retreat to #2. The current trading environment is the most challenging I have endured since 2013 (which was my worst year ever at -13% ROR). Option #3 is not even a second thought.

How bad is bad? Consider the following:

Factor Service Tracking Account			
Year(s)	Win rate*	# trades >100 BPs	# trades >200 BPs
Career	44%	NA	NA
2014-2016	53%	19% of all trades	9% of all trades
2014	55%	16	8
2015	53%	33	20
2016	52%	41	14
2017	39%	4 (7% of all trades)	1 (2% of all trades)
PAST PERFORMANCE IS NOT NECESSARILY INDICATIVE OF FUTURE RESULTS			
*Tranches of the same trades or re-entry of trades are counted separately. 2017 represented my highest win-rate of my career based on themes			

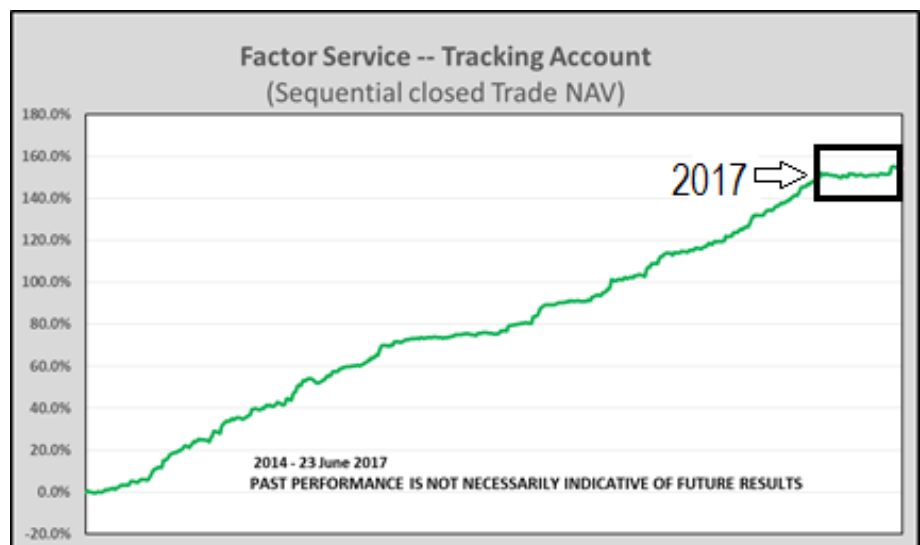
A much more vital consideration than points #1 through #6 above is the need to protect trading capital. Capital preservation during challenging trading conditions is JOB #1 for a trader because favorable trading conditions come and they go. It is far easier to make money in the markets than it is to keep the profits one has made.

Many of you know that I track trading performance based on sequential closed trade NAV – in my way of thinking open trade equity means nothing because it does not belong to me. Only closed profits matter. [Of course, trading is marked-to-the-market for the purpose of annual tax reporting.]

The graph below is the sequential closed trade NAV for the Factor Tracking Account since inception. You will note that the NAV curve recently registered a new-all-time record high due to the closed trade in Mpls. Wheat. Profitable trades during 2017 have averaged \$642 while losing trades have averaged (-\$210).

[Note: the Factor Tracking Account has outperformed Factor’s proprietary trading performance during 2017.

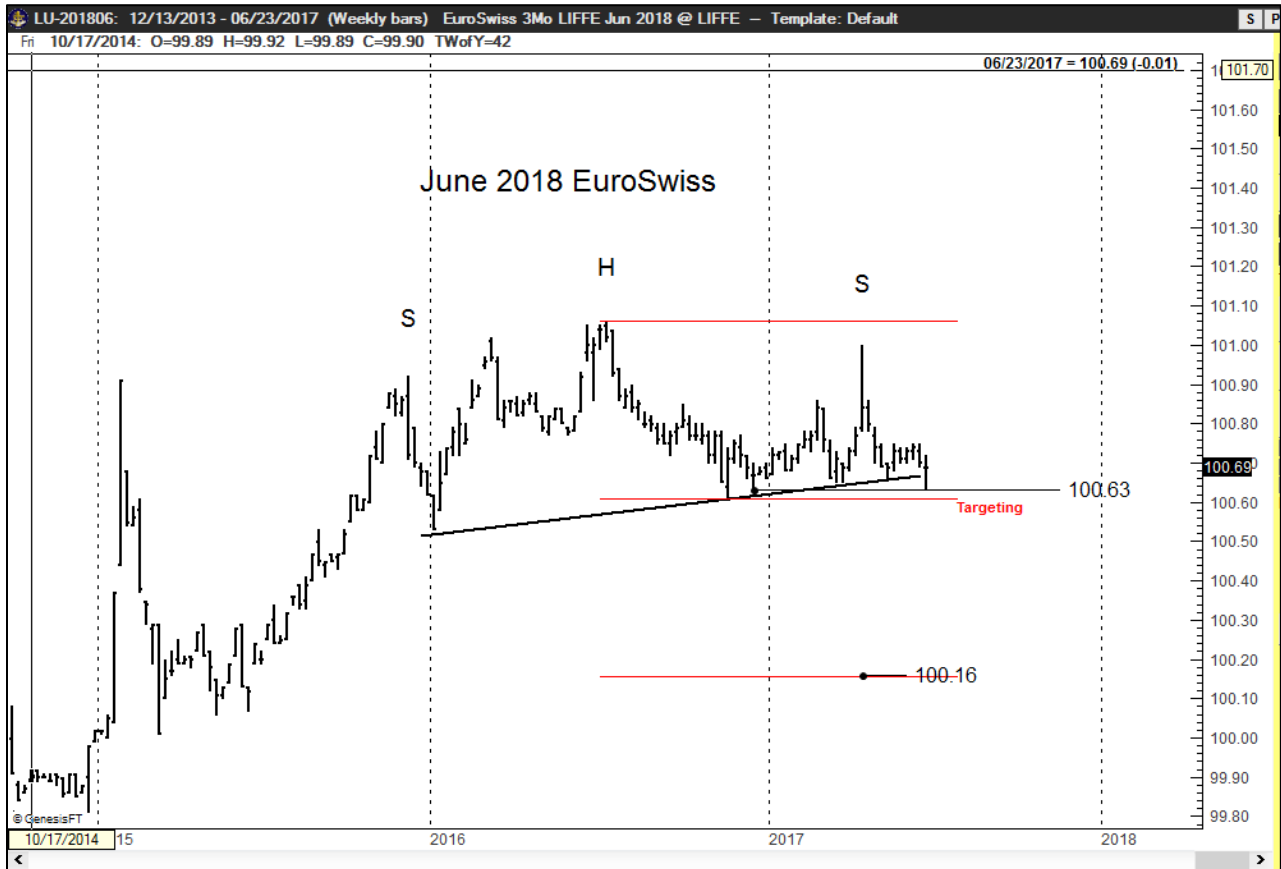
While the Factor Tracking Account has posted a new all-time sequential NAV high, Factor’s proprietary account is one “Net Bottom Liner” shy of the same.]



Candidate Factor Moves™ Setting Up

EuroSwiss (interest rate) – a premature or false breakout occurred on Thursday

The weekly continuation graph continues to form a 30-month textbook descending triangle – a bearish pattern. The target of this pattern is 100.22 (or a negative 22 basis point interest rate yield). The weekly graph of the June 2018 contract displays a complex H&S top pattern. Factor is flat. I will short the Jun 2018 contract if support at 100.61 gives way. Note that a sharp and sudden decline on Thursday actually penetrated the neckline intraday before closing back above the neckline.



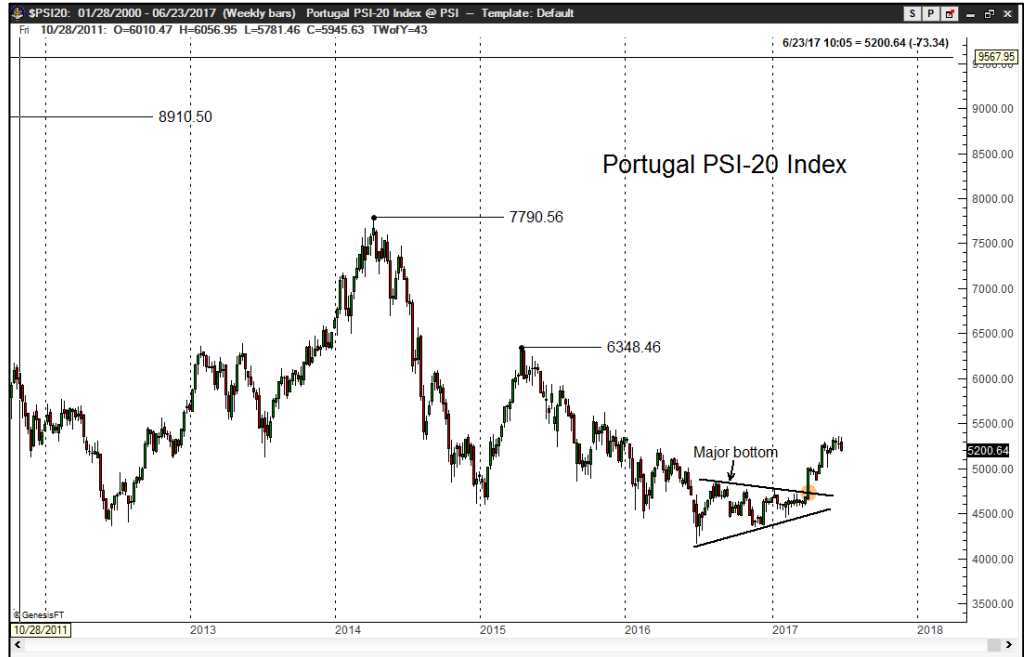
European banks – H&S bottoms are in no hurry

I will discontinue weekly coverage of the pending H&S bottoms in European bank stocks (CS, DB and UBS) until prices begin to challenge the necklines. The moving average I most monitor (14-day) is moving down in all three stocks.

Candidate Factor Moves™ in Progress

Portugal PSI-20 and PGAL – a correction in the major bull trend is underway

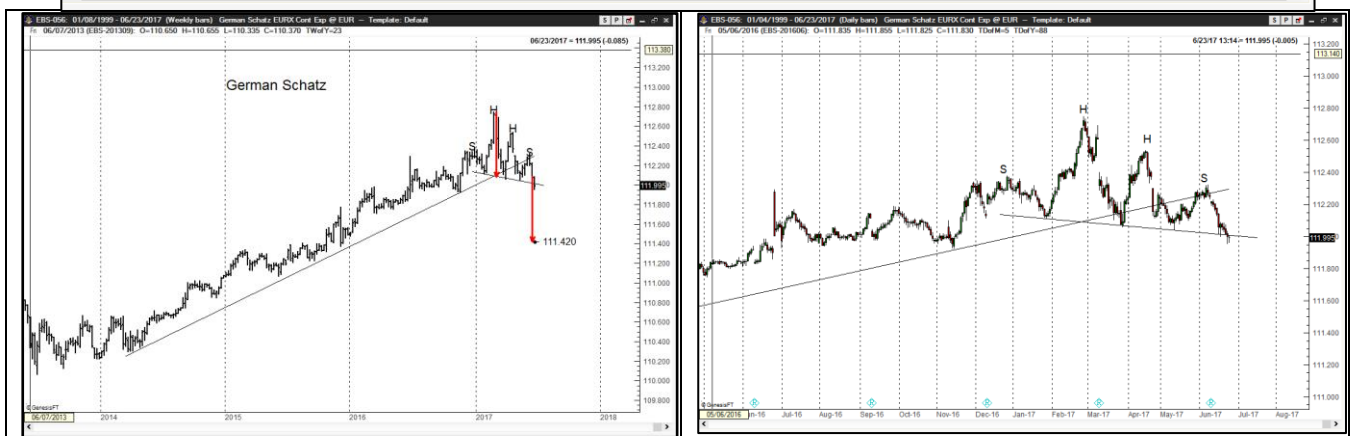
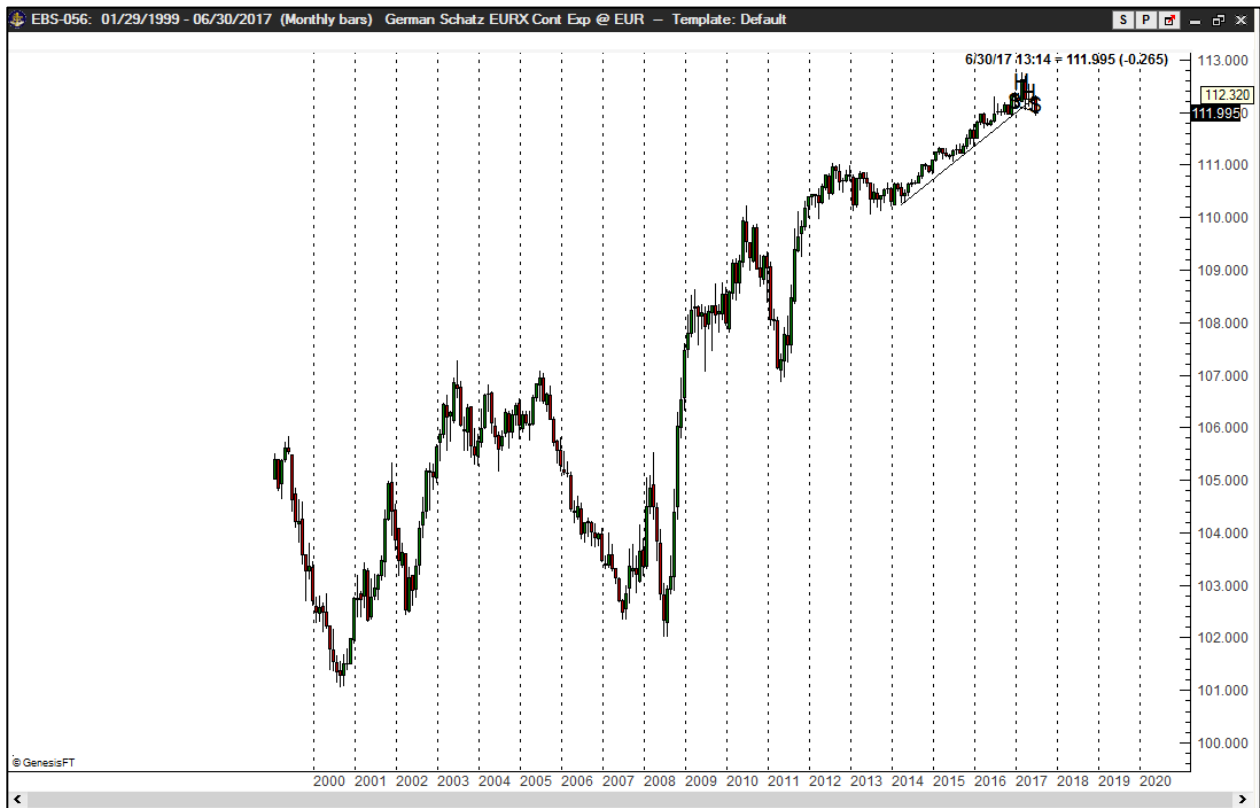
A correction in PSI-20 and PGAL is underway on the daily graph. I am mentally prepared to “popcorn” my long position.



Other Markets

German Schatz – this could be a test of whether chart trading might return to normal

The Schatz has been in a strong bullish trend (yields down) since the 2008 global meltdown, as seen on the monthly graph. I have featured this market as a candidate short several times in recent months. The weekly graph has violated a 3+ year trendline and has arguably complete a complex H&S top on the weekly and daily charts. The Schatz graphs could prove to be the prototype of the challenges of trading chart configurations in 2017. In normal markets this market would be a "lay-up" short with prices declining in an immediate and sustained manner. My expectation is that this will not be the case. Nevertheless, I shorted the Sep 2017 contract on Wednesday. If you examine the daily chart closely you will see that Jun 15 would have been a preferred shoring date. As of Friday the German 2-year Schatz yield was negative $-.63\%$.



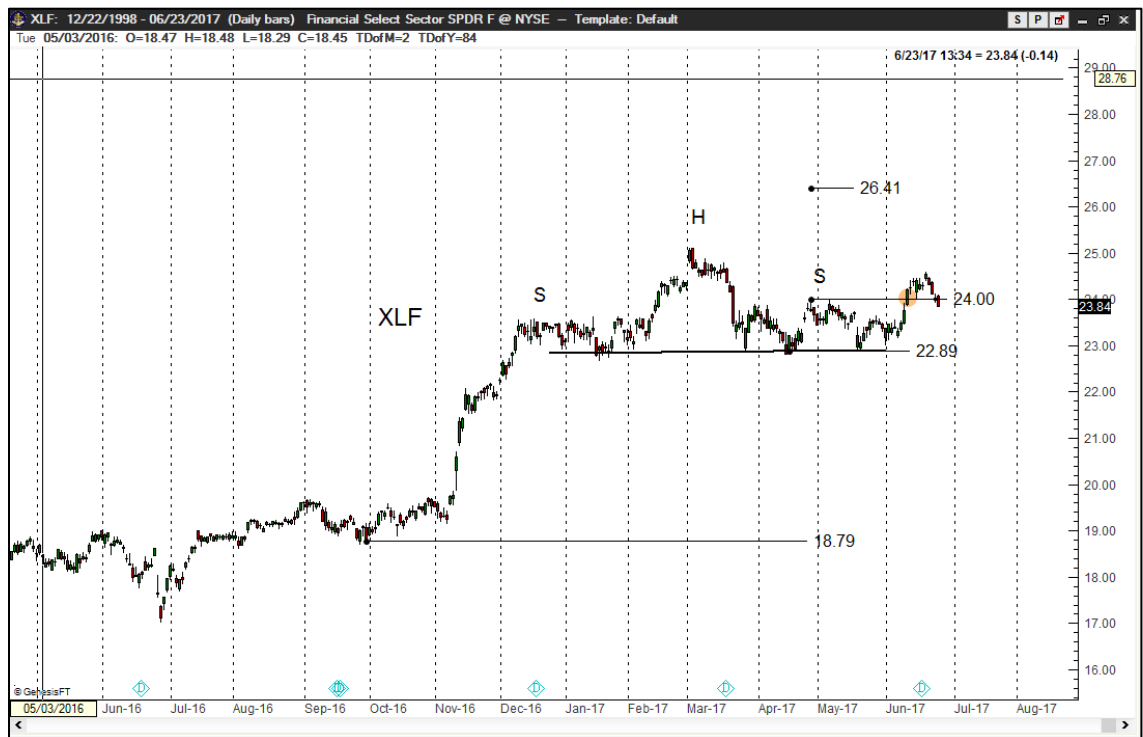
New Zealand Dollar – is the market constructing a bearish descending triangle top?

The Kiwi could be forming a bearish descending triangle. This interpretation would require prices to top soon and at current levels and then turn down sharply.



Financial Select Sector (XLF) – support is giving way

The close above the Apr 26 high completed the H&S failure pattern on the daily chart of XLF. I will continue to do whatever is necessary to protect my trading capital. One of my trading rules



is to not take home a losing trade on a Friday. Accordingly the Factor exited the long XLF trade on Friday and is now flat.

Grain markets – bottoms in grains are agonizing affairs

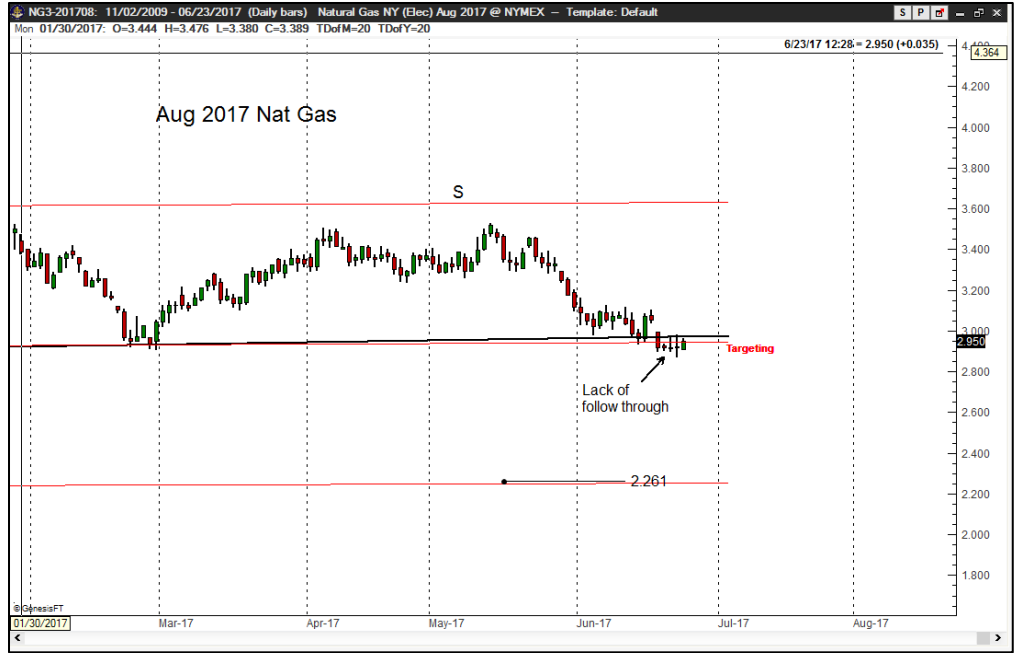
I have previously commented that the bottoming process in the grain markets can be agonizing and require a considerable period of time. With the exception of Mpls Wheat this is exactly what is happening. In hindsight I exited Mpls Wheat prematurely – the 6.94 target is within reach with a further possible target of 8.13. None of the other major grain products have developed similar momentum. Consistent with my trading rule to liquidate losing trades on Fridays, the Factor exited Chicago Wheat this past week. This is purely a capital protection rule – the chart of the Dec contract remains constructive with the possibility of a 10-month double bottom. The weekly charts of Dec Corn and Nov Beans are totally unappealing. The daily chart of Dec Oats ripped into new contract highs on Friday in what appears to be a play on northern U.S.-grown protein grain.



Energy markets – charts are negative --- but?????

The charts of all the energy markets are decisively bearish – all displaying forms of rounding or H&S tops. Rounding tops are among the most difficult patterns to trade. I have no desire to be involved on the short side of Crude Oil, RB Gas or Heating Oil given the oversold conditions and unreliability of classical chart patterns in 2017. I took a shot at the

short side of Natural Gas on Monday, but the inability of the market to make any downward follow through gave me second thoughts. To repeat again – in my opinion capital management trumps the analysis of a particular chart. Nevertheless, the inability of Natural Gas to climb back above the H&S neckline on the closing price chart indicates lower prices ahead.



Kospi (and EWY-
etf) – correction in
progress

The dominant chart construction is the completed 5-year continuation symmetrical triangle on the Kospi monthly graph. The Index has a price target of 2616. The U.S. etf (EWY) has also confirmed its bullish pattern. There is a chance that the correction on the daily chart (see inset) has run its course. Factor is long EWY with a revised protective stop based on Wednesday's low.



U.S. stock indexes – the Russell 2000 continues to form a possible top pattern

The trend in the DJIA, NASDAQ and S&Ps remains strongly up. However, there are no tradeable patterns for a long-side trade (charts not shown). The daily continuation futures graph of the Russell 2000 displays a well-developed right-angled broadening triangle (RABT). A decline and close below 1331 by the Russell (futures)

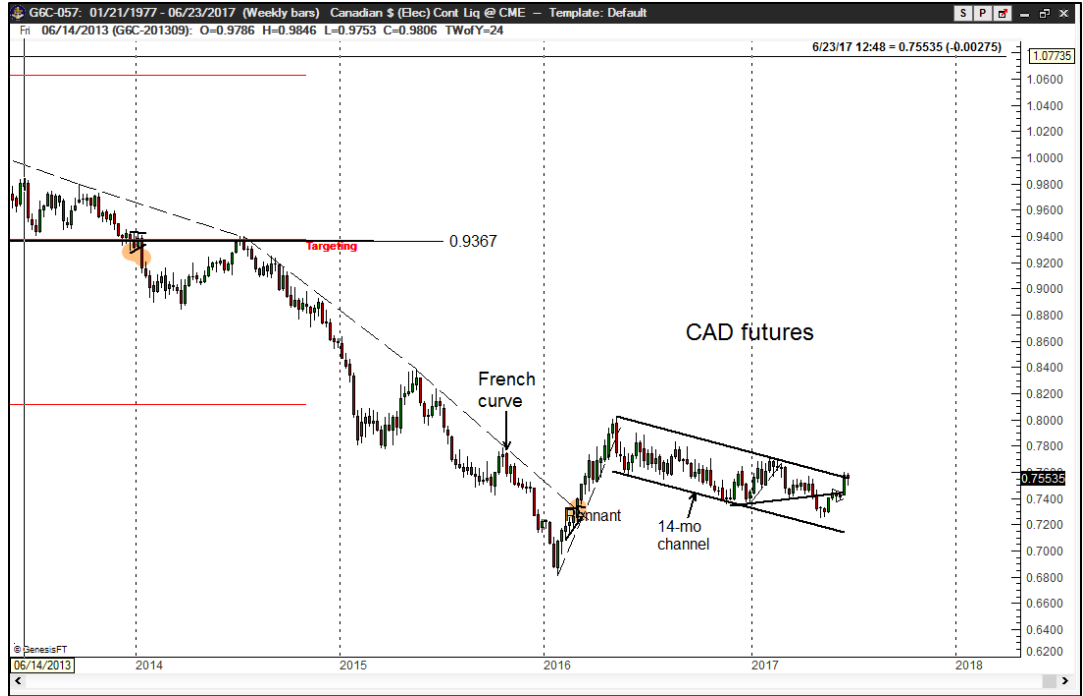


would complete this triangular pattern. The Russell 2000 ETF (IWM) has the same form as the Russell Index. Factor is flat in all U.S. stock index futures and ETFs.



Canadian Dollar (futures) – the best trades come from creative possibilities

A bullish scenario for Canadian Dollar futures was detailed in the Jun 11 Factor Update. The advance on Jun 12 completed a small pennant on the daily chart – putting the Factor into a long position. This past week’s low is my risk point. The next hurdle



to a bull trend in the C\$ is the 14-month channel on the weekly graph. Despite the rally from the early May low commercials hold near all-time record long positions while specs hold near all-time record short positions. Factor is long and I am willing to pyramid this trade should the channel be penetrated.

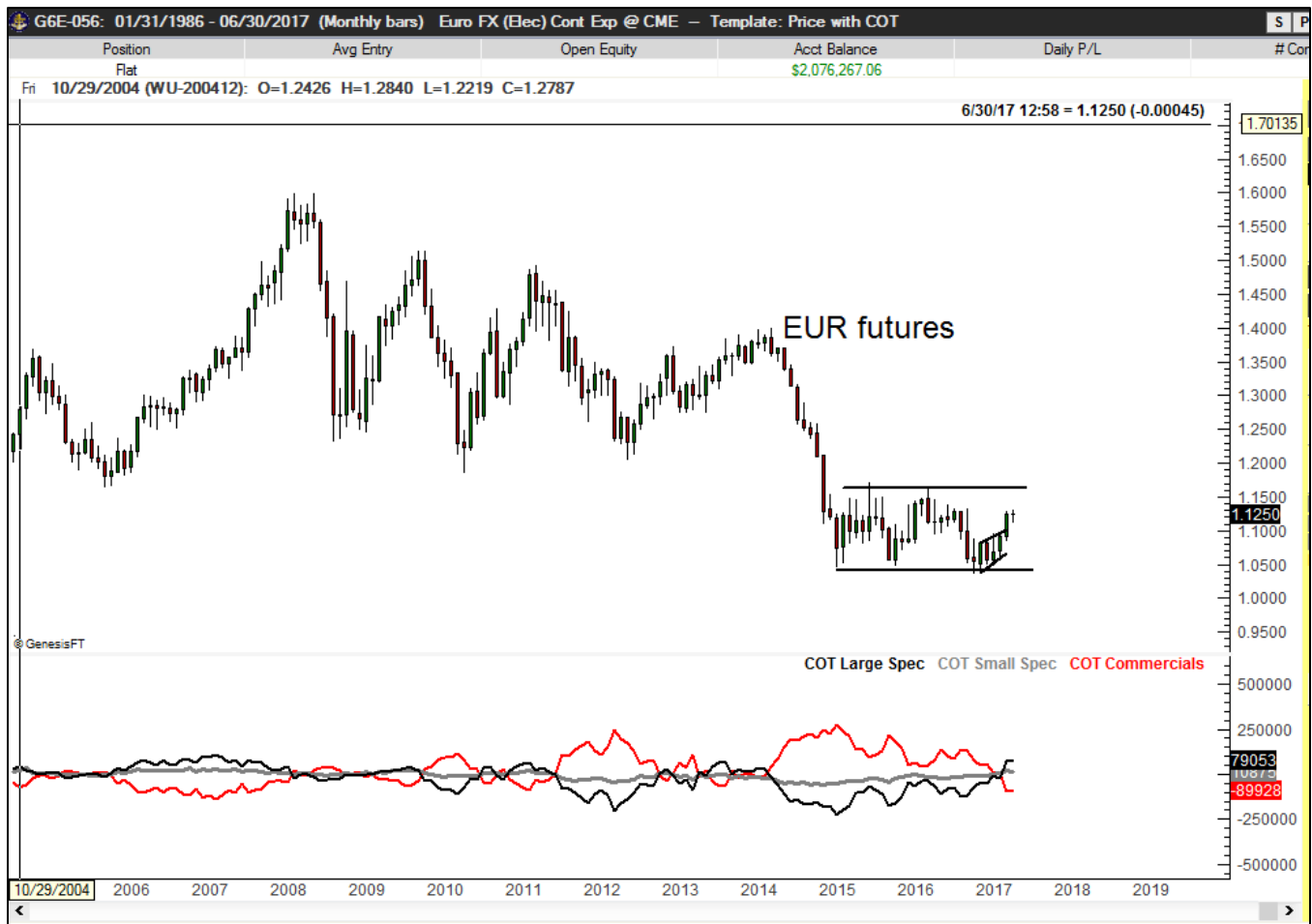


When to hold 'em and when to fold 'em

I do not want you to miss a point from this week's Update. I want nothing to do with trades that dig into my pocket (Wheat, Nat Gas and XLF) but am willing to stay around in trades that have not yet threatened my entry (Canadian Dollar, Schatz, PGAL, EWY). In the truest sense this is about cutting losses short and allowing profits to run. Sooner or later this process will return to glory. This is to say that if a chart pattern from which a trade is based has not been negated AND the position is not at a loss, then I want to "hold 'em.". The reality is that all traders need to deal with the tension created when nothing seems to work. My job as a prop trader is to make money, not just to tread water. The Factor Tracking Account has spent the entire 2017 in a 520 basis point range (ROR, sequential closed trades). My entire philosophy of trading has been to keep my capital together until outstanding trading conditions reappear. This remains my game plan. Yet, I cannot force something to happen before its time.

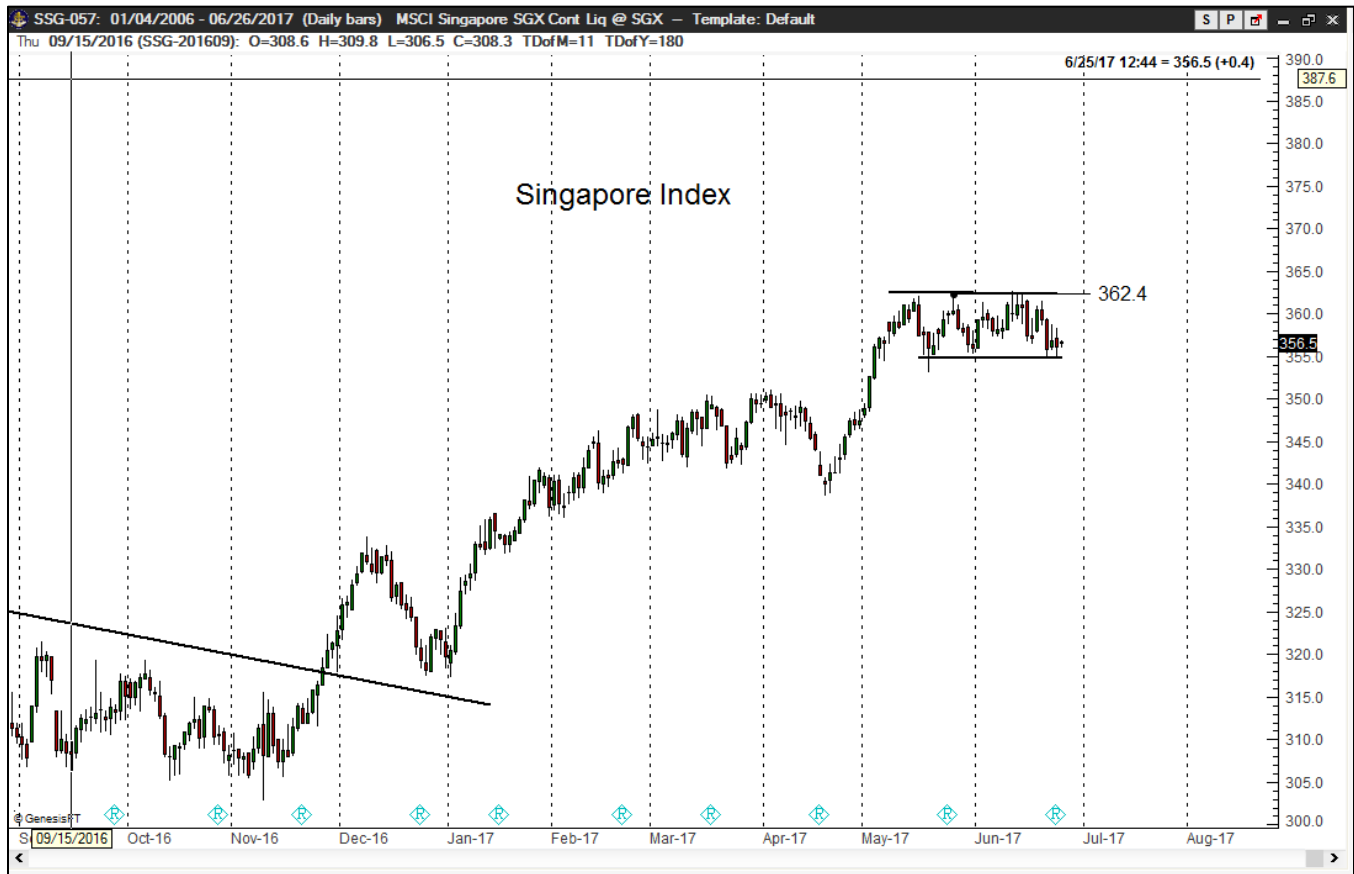
EUR/USD – how long will this forex cross remain within a 10% range?

This forex cross remains within a very tight and lengthy rectangle pattern on the weekly graph. Prices are advancing toward the upper boundary of this trading range. Commercials have a net short position last seen at the 2011 top. Specs have the largest net long position since Oct 2013. It remains to be seen if this COT positioning will impact price action.



Singapore Index – continuation of bull trend is still on the table

Not that I am a global macro trader, but the Shiller-Case Evaluation Ratio of the Singapore stock market is among the cheapest in the world (Russia is by far the best value with the Czech Republic in the second spot). I like tight and well-defined short-duration patterns (pennants especially) within the context of a strong trend. The Singapore Index displays a 6-week pennant. I am willing to go with an upside breakout of this pennant, but according to the theme of 2017 I will run quickly if a breakout lacks immediate follow through. Factor is flat.



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