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EQUITIES	Close	Change	% +/-	P/E '05	YTD
ISEQ	6719 ↑	33	0.49%	11.0	8.41%
FTSE 100	5416 ↓	-13	-0.24%	13.5	12.51%
DAX 30	4963 ↑	37	0.75%	15.0	16.61%
DOW	10482 ↓	-76	-0.72%	19.5	-2.80%
NASDAQ	2131 ↓	-14	-0.65%	15.6	2.03%
S&P	1221 ↓	-10	-0.79%	21.0	0.77%

CURRENCIES	Euro	Dollar	Stg	Yen
Euro	1.0000	1.2206	0.6747	136.1000
Dollar	1.2206	1.0000	1.8087	111.4900
Sterling	0.6747	1.8087	1.0000	201.6500
Yen	136.1000	111.4900	201.6500	1.0000
Oil (Nymex)	67.4800			

This Week's Research
Friends Provident
McInerney

Today's Research
IFG Group

Breaking News

Elan plans re-launch of Tysabri

Biogen and Elan announced yesterday that they would be filing an additional market application for Tysabri for the treatment of MS. Biogen and Elan didn't state specifically when they would file the new application. Biogen chief executive officer James Mullen had previously said the companies would complete their safety review of Tysabri by Wednesday, September 21. However, on Tuesday, the companies said the review would now be completed 'in the coming weeks.'

Quinn Direct takes large stake in McInerney

McInerney announced yesterday that Quinn Direct Insurance Limited has taken a substantial holding in the company. In a regulatory announcement it has been revealed that the company purchased 1,464,000 ordinary shares in McInerney on Monday. The transaction gives Quinn direct a 4.42% holding in the company.

Fed raises rates for 11th consecutive time

Federal Reserve raised U.S. interest rates on Tuesday for an 11th straight time, signaling more increases to come and saying Hurricane Katrina will provide only a temporary setback to the broad economy. But Fed Board Governor Mark Olson dissented from the rate-rise vote, saying he preferred to hold borrowing costs steady. This was the first such dissent since June 2003. By a nine-to-one vote, the policy-setting Federal Open Market Committee opted to increase the benchmark federal funds rate charged on overnight loans between banks a quarter of a percentage point to 3.75 percent. In a statement outlining its decision, the Fed said U.S. spending, production and employment will suffer a near-term knock from Katrina and that energy prices may be elevated and volatile.

Business Press

- Ryanair 'not consulted properly' on proposals for terminal (IT)
- Persian Gold finds gold indicators (IT)
- Bol begins hunt for new boss at BIAM (II)
- Ryanair expansion hit by Boeing strike (IT)

IFG Group (€1.35) Preview of H1 results Stuart Draper

- Results preview : IFG Group will announce results for the 6 months ended 30/06/05 next Tuesday, 27th September. We are forecasting core profit before tax and earnings per share of €5.3m and 6.5c respectively, year on year increases of 10% and 8%. IFG reports core activity figures to enable year on year comparisons to be made before discontinued activities, exceptional items and goodwill.
- Growth resuming : Such growth will be driven by further impressive performances by the group's International and Irish businesses not being held back by profit declines from the UK operations, as was the case last year. Helped by the appointment of a new CEO for its UK business in September 2004, IFG's UK division, which contains pension release, actuarial and IFA units, should show some recovery in 2005.
- Mortgages buoyant : IFG's mortgage broker, Mortgage Business Solutions, has already reported a strong 39% increase in business volumes for the first half of 2005. Particularly impressive was the 66% growth in re-mortgaging business. This is because the re-mortgage market is expected to account for 40% of the overall mortgage market in 3 year time from 25% currently, as more Irish consumers remortgage to consolidate their debt at lower interest rates.
- Debt reduction : Increasing regulation looks set to ensure that IFG's International business remains the largest contributor to group profits, and increasing demand for title insurance should be another growth driver at its Irish mortgage business. The group is also on course to further reduce its net debt from €36.7m to c.€30m over the course of 2005.
- Settlement reached : Earlier this week, IFG announced that it had reached a settlement in relation to litigation against those from whom it purchased its discontinued pension release business, Berkeley Jacobs. Under the settlement, IFG was awarded the right to repurchase 911,226 of its shares from the vendor (worth c.€1.2m) for the nominal sum of €3. This should boost 2005 eps by c.1.5%, with the stock being held as treasury stock.
- Further upside : As a result of the prospect of such earnings growth resuming in 2005, some months ago we upgraded our price target for IFG to €1.20. We now further upgrade our 12 month price target to €1.50 (11% further upside), which is based on 10x 2006 core eps of 15c. IFG's share price has risen by 26% since our last BUY note of 18/07/05 : BUY.

Investment Press— Lex

- Tesco: Two things characterise a Tesco results day. One is the Eeyore-like gloom of Sir Terry Leahy, its chief executive; the second, the howls of protest from competitors at Tesco's apparently inexorable growth.



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