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ROHR-BLOG: Crunch Time... Again, Quick Take, Calendar

1 message

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Dear Subscribers,

Yes, the US EQUITIES are back to another 'Crunch Time', just like when the MARCH S&P 500 FUTURE dropped back toward the 3,030-00 area on the morning of February 27th (as noted in the title of that morning's 'Crunch Time' research note.)

Once they violated that area that day and could not maintain rallies back above it (on the first FOMC emergency rate cut that day and then Biden 'Super Tuesday' victories), they were primed to drop down to the broader trend channel support in the 2,600 area.

We are shifting straight into Evolutionary Trend View (ETV) mode after all of the background covered in recent research notes. Now that the MARCH S&P 500 FUTURE has been below that lower key 2,600 technical area (despite recent bear squeezes back above it), the next lower support is also important to understand the key market dynamics.

That is late December 2018's major UP Closing Price Reversal (CPR) from the sharp selloff 2,413.50 Close (Tolerance 2,409) the week before. This is even more important now due to rebounds from that area on Friday and again after slippage on Monday.

After inquiring on whether the 3,030-00 support would maintain the intermediate-term bull trend and the 2,600 area would hold up the broader bull trend from the January 2016 low (click into chart through Friday's Close <http://bit.ly/3aVpl1u>), it is now relevant to ask whether the 'bottom' activity from late 2018 will indeed remain support that stanches the current bearish tide?

To put that in context, the sharp late 2018 selloff to new lows for the year was in the wake of the fourth FOMC hike that year, right into a thin holiday market. The selloff was quickly reversed from a last week of the year 2,313 trading low (as we have already been noting below.)

At this phase in the overall ETV psychology is whether this old 2,413.50 CPR 'bottom' will hold well enough to leave potential for the trend to NEGATE the recent fresh 2,600 area weekly channel DOWN Break. If not, get ready for the S&P 500 to also violate 2,313 on the way to lower levels.

As noted in Monday's 'So What's What?' research note, part of the problem at present is nobody seems to know 'What's What'. Yet the market is often the best overall assessment of that as governmental and central bank actions are promised yet not immediately forthcoming.

As we have noted many times, it is very important to have 'sharp pencil' technical projections to understand the markets.

Without beating our own drum too terribly hard, our expression for many years is that the technicals are the 'Rosetta Stone' of market movement. The markets are attempting to communicate their own always correct (in the near-term) opinion of the overall situation. However, you need the ability to translate market activity at critical levels (ignoring the noise in between) into an understandable language.

In www.Rohr-Blog.com right below our bio is a link: 'Technicals are Rosetta Stone...' (<http://bit.ly/2wem9os>) from a few years ago (still relevant.) That uploads to the video section on the 'little secret' on old, rigid analytic schools cross pollination, and clarifies how therefore the technicals are necessary for any effective market perspective. [Those interested in a broader review of 'thoroughness' as a key to successful market assessment can view the whole video.]

And in the current circumstances whether the FRONT MONTH S&P 500 FUTURE (March expires Friday) holds 2,400 area is key to the other asset classes as well. That is especially on whether EMERGING CURRENCIES can

stanch the renewed bearish tide, and to a lesser degree whether GLOBAL GOVVIES hold lower supports.

Courtesy Repeat of Monday's Quick Take

The COVID-19 virus spread had caused the US EQUITIES intermediate-term bull psychology to 'crack'. Yet does this signal a 'breakdown' into a bear trend? The current selloff back below the front month S&P 500 future 2,600 area would speak of that being a greater possibility. As bad as US EQUITIES looked on the violation of the key congestion around the mid-2019 highs (highlighted in our previous 'Crunch Time' research note), the 'broad' trend support has now been violated.

That lower US EQUITIES support includes the longer-term weekly chart channel updated as of Friday's Close (<http://bit.ly/3aVpl1u>.) So in addition to the MARCH S&P 500 FUTURE (expiring Friday) violating the support from the 2019 congestion and push above the multi-year topping line at 3,070, the 3,030-00 previous all-time high congestion, and recent 2,970 DOWN Break below the overall up channel (from the 2,313 late 2018 low) has been violated once again.

That is also below FRONT MONTH S&P 500 FUTURE congestion in the already noted interim 2,850 area followed by the more prominent 2,750 area. That 2,600 area broadest weekly channel support (also 48-month MA) had a Tolerance to the mid-low 2,500 2018 congestion. The longer it is below that, the more so next supports are the late 2018 2,413-09 weekly UP Closing Price Reversal (also historic congestion), and the extreme low trade of that which was the 2,313 level (also more historic congestion; see the chart.) Below that the next supports are not until the interim 2,275 and more credible 2,200 mid-2016 congestion. More major lower support is not until the major all of 2015 2,125-00 congestion.

Even with previous US consumer-driven improvement, overall weakness of international data on balance continued despite selective previous partial improvement. That is of course now expected to significantly deteriorate.

This was reinforced by central banks' perspective even prior to them understanding the extent of the COVID-19 impact. That includes especially the ECB, with more telling perspective from Mario Draghi's last press conference (<http://bit.ly/2Nda1II>) and even Christine Lagarde's warning on the need for further structural reform at her first press conference as ECB President (<http://bit.ly/2LNRSpQ>.) Her views at last Thursday's press conference (<http://bit.ly/2vh3dVJ> Statement with presser link on the side) were even far

more pointed; including repeated admonitions that coordinated fiscal action needed to be timely to prevent a larger crisis.

While the Fed was more balanced, it was also concerned about global weakness despite previous US strength, as evidenced by its previous rate cuts and now acting on its discussion of being prepared to do what is necessary if the COVID-19 impact spreads in the US.

As previously noted for months, this was also consistent with serial downbeat OECD indications on a weaker global outlook. We saw more of the same in the December OECD Composite Leading Indicators (<http://bit.ly/2RA16VO>.) Even after those were reversed to some degree by the January release (<http://bit.ly/2tbMfa0>), the February indications (<http://bit.ly/2OXkpX1>) were that growth remains below trend and was threatened by the commercial impact of the rapidly spreading COVID-19 virus. And as we noted on March 9th, they summarily cancelled the next release that morning, which is a very radical step that says the future is very uncertain.

All of which was reinforced in a major way by their ‘out of normal cycle’ (typically not until May) March 2nd Interim Economic Assessment “Coronavirus: The world economy at risk” (<http://bit.ly/3cqTKeY>.)

Of special note in each case are the lower growth prospects for China despite the US-China Phase I deal. As we have noted previous, the trade ‘truce’ (i.e. NOT a full peace treaty) avoiding tariff escalation still leaves the earlier economic activity-stifling tariffs in place.

Future economic weakness expectations have also been reinforced in the relatively recent indications outside of the mixed global Manufacturing PMIs. Those include more comprehensive global data, like late-November’s OECD G20 International Merchandise Trade Statistics (<http://bit.ly/2rvPCaK>) that are now surely only that much worse. While all of that may improve to some degree once the COVID-19 threat passes, informed observers were already still cautious in any event due to the levels of tariffs that remain despite recent reductions announcements prior to the COVID-19 impact.

Evolutionary Trend View

Moving on now to a very concise critical market assessment in the wake of the US EQUITIES dropping below overall trend support from the early-2016 FRONT MONTH S&P 500 FUTURE 1,800 area lows (projected from (from the

2,313 late 2018 low.) As pointed out repeatedly for the past month-and-a-half, that likely means more GLOBAL GOVVIES strength, as we are seeing to varying degrees this morning.

The MARCH T-NOTE FUTURE surging into a new all-time high two weeks ago above the 134-00/-08 summer 2016 previous high was understandable (see the weekly chart through last Friday's Close <http://bit.ly/2x1z3GA>.)

As we had based our future expectation on its historic weekly Oscillator activity likely extending its rally at least into the 135-16/136-00 area (MA-41 plus 06-00/-16), which had already been violated two weeks ago. Sustained activity above that zone pointed to the next Oscillator resistance into the 138-00/-16 area (MA-41 plus 08-00/-16) it was already testing back then into its parabolic extension to the weekly Oscillator resistance in the 139-16/140-00 area (MA-41 plus 09-16/10-00) last week prior to its setback.

In fact, that sharp selloff later last week created a DOWN Closing Price Reversal (CPR) back below the 138-00 area (Tolerance that week's 138-16 high.) That is now the next resistance (fully reinforced by the Oscillator resistance (MA-41 plus 08-00/-16) with 140-00 area next.

Similarly, the previous strong sister BUND FUTURE had seen the MARCH CONTRACT rally back to fully test and exceed its 177.00-.50 resistance from last summer (weekly chart <http://bit.ly/33j380a>.) Much above that next resistance was not until 178.50 congestion from back then it hit prior to a week ago Friday's expiration, with a DOWN CPR at 179.20 (Tolerance at 179.67 all-time high) above.

Yet there was a twist here on the typical very early expiration of the MARCH CONTRACT that Friday with the JUNE BUND FUTURE trading almost 3.00 lower. While there was a chance it would be back into or below the 175.60-.00 area, in the event the strength of the uptrend extension in the MARCH BUND FUTURE to test that mid-179.00 resistance left the JUNE BUND FUTURE trading above 175.60-.00. That implied instead of weakening back below it, it was more likely to trend up into the 177.00-.50 resistance and above.

And while we always expect the second month contract to swing back up to front month values if the BUND maintains its up trend, the JUNE BUND FUTURE had done this in record time: literally between becoming the front month on a week ago Friday into only early afternoon (Central European Time) last Monday. That push up into the low 179.00 area was once again only a retest of the early September DOWN CPR.

And after that last week it sagged back below the 177.50-.00 area since Tuesday, has been unable to sustain activity back above it, and even left a fresh DOWN CPR from the previous week's 176.52 Close. As such, despite the strength of the other GLOBAL GOVVIES that weakness has now carried below next lower support in the 175.60-.00 range and is even trading at present below next lower 173.25 area support. Next lower support reverts back to the congestion and 170.50 NEGATED DOWN Break tested extensively over the winter.

As far the MARCH GILT FUTURE (expiring at the end of next week) is concerned also at new all-time highs like the T-NOTE, last week it overran the September 2019 135.26 weekly DOWN Closing Price Reversal (Tolerance to 135.87.) That also overran some historic weekly Oscillator resistance at 137.00-.50 (MA-41 plus 4.00-.50.)

This left the next weekly Oscillator resistance at 139.00-.50 (MA-41 plus 6.00-.50) it had already tested two weeks ago and overran temporarily last week. And much like the T-NOTE, last week's selloff left a DOWN CPR from the previous week's 139.00 area Close (Tolerance right there as well due to that Close being at the high of the week.) Not only did the MARCH GILT FUTURE back down into the 137.00 area, but the major discount in the JUNE GILT FUTURE leaves it back into the 135.26 violated weekly DOWN Closing Price Reversal support. Next support below that is hefty recent and historic 133.00 area congestion and weekly MA-41.

In FOREIGN EXCHANGE the DEVELOPED CURRENCIES have also seen massive shifts over the past few weeks. As noted previous, even though the US DOLLAR INDEX had a 'haven' bid as recently as three weeks ago, since then it has been under extensive pressure against the other DEVELOPED CURRENCIES (including the recent atypical depression of the other 'haven' JAPANESE YEN.) While the volatility in this area is also historically extreme, US DOLLAR weakness is not a surprise with COVID-19 is spreading in the previously 'safe' United States.

Firmer US economic data had assisted the US DOLLAR INDEX last summer in finally fully overrunning the mid-upper 97.00 resistance. That inspired the push above the April-May 98.37 area trading highs which occurred in early August prior to lapsing back into near-term weakness. Next levels were the interim 99.00 area, yet with the more prominent area not until the 99.50-100.00 'big penny' historic congestion at which it failed again on the retest two weeks ago (just like last October.)

After weakening in the end of February it recently failed back below 98.37-.00 (also important cluster of weekly MAs in the upper 97.00 area) on its way to also cracking the 96.50-.00 well-established congestion range support held at the end of last year. With the previous COVID-19 flight to US safety reversed, it was retesting the longer-term congestion in the 96.00-95.84 area (12-month trading low.) Much below that is the interim congestion into the recently tested 95.00 area it held again this week, with the more major 94.00-93.70 area below. Yet the recent return of concerns elsewhere has seen it surge back up into the 98.37-.00 area.

While EUR/USD was under pressure again early this year due to its still weak economy, the initial response to the COVID-19 spread there took it to 33-month lows below last October's 1.0878 trading low prior to the current sharp recovery. That the EURO is strengthening so much against the US DOLLAR is a sign of 'greenback avoidance'. The US DOLLAR losing its haven bid has seen EUR/USD surge back above 1.0800 and even the more prominent 1.1000 area as well as the heavy 1.1250-00 area. That is now the next lower support, with higher resistance reverting to the prominent 1.1400-50 congestion (also the previous full year trading highs) it exceeded only temporarily last Monday from which it has backed off into the 1.1100 area.

GBP/USD had already held up much better against the US DOLLAR than other DEVELOPED CURRENCIES in the wake of the Brexit vote finally confirming its exit from the EU. While failing from 1.3500 again in December as well as back below the interim 1.3200 congestion, it only worked its way gradually into the historically important 1.3000-1.2800 range.

Even on the US DOLLAR surge into two weeks ago, GBP/USD only dropped to a Close near the bottom of that range. As such, its recent recovery against the greenback is a bit less dramatic than the previously depressed EURO and JAPANESE YEN.

However, the BoE leading the emergency rate cut efforts last week spooked the POUND bulls, leaving it back below 1.2800. Since then it has traded below 1.2500-1.2450 nearer to the interim 1.2200 area and major 1.2000-1.1960 September 2019 three-and-a-half year trading low.

And despite US-China rapprochement on the Phase I trade and tariffs agreement, AUD/USD remains depressed on the heavier East Asian COVID-19 impact. That is only as expected, even as it has finally seen a minor bounce this week on the US DOLLAR weakness. Yet that is still from well below the .7000 area held in mid-May of last year.

Minor squeezes temporarily back above the .7000 area were only a prelude to slipping more definitively below it last July. Next lower major support was the .6825 area early-2016 10-year trading lows it also slipped below around the same time.

That is important after it slipped below next interim support at .6690-77 in early February on COVID-19 driven weak Chinese economic concerns. The .6500 area was the next support it slipped below along with now violating the .6250 areas next support. That is the last congestion this side of the .6000 area October 2008 16-year trading low.

In light of the recent more radical swings we are resurrecting our analysis of the USD/JPY. This was the prima facie example of the extreme 'haven' bid in the US DOLLAR two weeks ago, as the typical fellow 'haven' currency YEN came under heavy pressure on the USD/JPY surge above 110.00 for the first time since May 2019, leading to an immediate rally to the prominent 112.00-.50 area into the end of that week.

Yet here as well, once the US DOLLAR came under pressure on its loss of 'haven' status due to the COVID-19 spread in the previously safe US, it 'crashed' last week back below the 110.00 area to Close into 108.00 again. Yet that did not hold since two weeks ago began on weakness that carried below the interim 106.00 area and once again below the very prominent 105.00-104.50 range (39-month trading low with major tests in March 2018, January 2018 and August 2019.) Next lower congestion is not until the interim 102.50 area that it traded below last Monday prior to Closing in that area and now recovering above the low 105.00 area to roughly 106.00. More major lower congestion is into the summer 2016 100.00-99.07 summer 2016 extensive major range 6-year trading lows.

And EMERGING CURRENCIES that had been under pressure were recovering to some degree, yet are now back under pressure. The SA RAND has seen USD/ZAR overrun 15.40-.50 into testing the 15.69 September 2018 high prior to pulling back. Yet even though it sagged all the way to 15.20 early last week, it was back above 15.40-.50 and challenging the 15.69 resistance late week. It started out this week surging above the 16.00 and 16.30 next higher congestion resistances all the way to the 16.95 resistance (nearer the major January 2016 17.94 all-time high) prior to setting back around 16.00 earlier this week. However, fresh economic concerns have seen it rally back above 16.30 and interim 16.45 at present, with not much until 16.95 once again.

The RUSSIAN RUBLE had seen USD/RUB push above 66.50-67.00 on weak Crude Oil as well (economic weakness driven) prior to dropping back on short-term EQUITIES and CRUDE OIL recovery. Back out above it last week left the bigger resistance not until 69.00-70.00 it began this week pushing sharply above. And historically there is not much resistance again until the 75.00 area (early 2016 congestion) which it has duly tested early this week prior to pulling back nearer to the interim 71.00 area. Yet here as well the return of economic stresses has seen it rally back up above 75.00 of late (trading high 75.46) prior to trading just below it last week and again right now at present. Higher resistances are the 80.00 and 85.00 areas last seen on the early 2016 surge.

Even the previously more resilient MEXICAN PESO has seen USD/MXN surge through 19.50-.60 on its way to testing the interim 19.95 area prior to slipping back temporarily. Yet it recently exceeded that once again along with a temporary surge above the 20.25 resistance prior to dropping back below it at the end of last week. Yet here as well we had noted that PESO weakness might continue on the COVID-19 North American impact, with next resistances not until 20.50 and 20.65 that were sharply overrun on Monday.

That also saw it surge above the 20.96 June 2018 high (also congestion) on the way to a retest of the 22.03 January 2017 all-time high prior to setting back around the 20.96 area earlier last week. Yet the return of the economic stresses and weak Crude Oil prices have seen it surge to a new 22.95 all-time high prior to setting back toward the 22.00 area last week. Yet at present the renewed economic concerns and Crude Oil weakness leaves it trading up into 22.60 area after setting a new 23.06 all-time high earlier today. Of note, this also exceeds previous repeated weekly Oscillator resistance (MA-41 plus 2.30) that should have kicked in around 21.60 last week... time to reassess that once the current surge is over.

Of note, the TURKISH LIRA had been relatively steady through all of the EMERGING CURRENCY turmoil elsewhere. Yet it has been under pressure since USD/TRY held key 5.50-5.45 support and pushed back above 5.65-.60 range along with last July's 5.7871 high from after the central bank governor dismissal. Key resistance at 5.90-5.93 was also exceeded again in January.

USD/TRY has now even strengthened above the 6.00 area that seemed to point to a retest of interim 6.15 area that was also exceeded on the way to a test of the May 2019 crisis 6.25 area 17-month trading high. Compared to the weakness of other EMERGING CURRENCIES this previously left the LIRA a bastion of stability. Yet now above the 6.25 area leaves the door open to a test of the higher September 2018 6.45-6.55 congestion it is already nearing, or

even possibly the extended higher 6.72 and 6.83 levels or even the 7.10 area all-time high seen during the 2018 LIRA crisis.

While still obviously less relevant (as we have been noting for some time and is most glaringly apparent again at present) on the standard report releases in the midst of more major global trade and political cross currents, the Weekly Report & Event Calendar (accessible for Sterling and higher level subscribers) is available via the www.rohr-blog.com sidebar.

As we have been noting for some time in our research notes, regularly scheduled releases are obviously less relevant in the face of 'macro' factors; and especially (as our anticipatory views into mid-February had highlighted) the highly pernicious impact of the COVID-19 virus.

This was glaringly apparent once again on last week's US government failures followed by Friday's extended attempt to renew confidence in its pandemic response. There are also the near-term economically troubling yet hopefully immunologically enlightened responses from many other global national and regional governments.

That said, there are still some very important economic releases and central bank influences in this once again typically very full week. Even if they will only act as a backdrop for the future COVID-19 impact and other 'macro' influences, they will still be important.

Already at the top of this week in Asia the Reserve Bank of New Zealand has put through an emergency 75 basis point cut to its base rate to just 0.25%, and the US FOMC has done likewise.

There are Monday's Chinese economic releases followed by a scheduled National Bureau of Statistics press conference and then the Bundesbank Monthly Report. Tuesday brings the RBA meeting minutes that might provide some insight on their approach to countering the COVID-19 impact, and US February Retail Sales and Industrial Production that are not expected to as yet be impacted by the COVID-19 pressures.

Wednesday sees a raft of European data along with the start of a range of central bank decision and press conferences: FOMC Wednesday followed by the BoJ and SNB Thursday and the PBoC on Friday. Along the way we will undoubtedly availed of much more information and press conferences from US and global governments on all levels, especially governors of key states and Trump & Company.

Also still keep in mind that for the next two weeks the US is already on Daylight Savings Time with Europe and the UK only moving their clocks forward on Sunday, March 29th.

And due to the vagaries of the COVID-19 volatility on full display again over the past two weeks, we maintain our recent classic advice: Keep those seat belts firmly fastened.

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