

Market Commentary

Third Quarter 2019



CI Can-Am Small Cap Corporate Class

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Class F returns (in %) as at September 30, 2019	Year-to-date	1 year	3 year	5 year	10 year	Since inception (11/30/2000)
CI Can-Am Small Cap Corporate Class	8.4	-6.4	0.4	1.7	8.2	9.2

Source: Morningstar Direct as at September 30, 2019.

Market Overview

- In Canada, small-capitalization stocks have underperformed the broader market, primarily due to challenges in the energy and base-metals-related segments of the market.

Performance Summary

- Over the third quarter of 2019, Class F of CI Can-Am Small Cap Corporate Class (the “Fund”) returned 0.53%, outperforming its blended benchmark (50% S&P 1000 Total Return Index/50% S&P/TSX Small Cap Total Return Index), which was up 0.03% over the same period.
- Exposure to quality financials holdings that offered value and avoidance of weaker businesses in the health care sector were key contributors to our outperformance. In particular, we benefitted from side-stepping declines from the early-stage cannabis sector in favour of businesses with strong franchises and management teams.

Contributors to Performance

- Shares of iA Financial Corp. added relative value as the company reported healthy operating results and a further strengthening of its balance-sheet positioning.
- Commercial lender Canadian Western Bank continued to execute on its business diversification efforts while raising its dividend 4% and returning additional capital to share owners through its buyback.



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Detractors from Performance

- Secure Energy Services Inc., despite focusing on its steadier producing assets, detracted from our performance in the period, as the energy sector suffered from low commodity prices and slow industry activity. Another victim of the energy sector's woes was ARC Resources Ltd., which also pulled down our portfolio's value.
- SNC-Lavalin Group Inc. also detracted, as the company continued to provide unsatisfactory information on its efforts to rebuild its reputation, as discussed below.

Portfolio Activity

- The Fund initiated an investment in SmartCentres Real Estate Investment Trust during the quarter, which offers both reasonable growth and defensive attributes. Strong anchor tenants such as Walmart and Canadian Tire are expected to provide stability through periods of economic downturn.
- We also purchased Stella-Jones Inc., a North American producer of treated wood products, such as railway ties and utility poles. The company provides steady growth and excess cash flow, which they employ to reduce debt, grow dividends or fund opportunistic acquisitions. Stella-Jones is a reasonably priced company of above-average quality. It enhances our portfolio's cash-flow stability and return on equity.
- We finished exiting our position in SNC-Lavalin Group Inc. after its latest quarterly report provided disappointing information, including a lack of meaningful progress on key milestones. SNC-Lavalin continues to work toward rebuilding its reputation after legal issues from pre-2012 issues, but this process is unlikely to conclude anytime soon as the company awaits a trial on federal charges. In addition, its once highly profitable engineering and construction business has been tarnished by several failed fixed-price contracts and the path toward positive cash flow is uncertain.

Outlook

- Global equity returns have been strong in 2019, but the path to these gains has been volatile. International trade conflicts have increased economic and market uncertainty. Meantime, accommodative central bank policy has supported asset valuations. The weak fundamentals behind the Canadian market gains, which has been largely unsupported by corporate earnings, is cause for concern. Growth and gold-related equities continue to outperform, while value stocks have lagged.

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- If this trend persists, our strategy could result in underperformance. However, we remain committed to our investment and risk-management process that has historically generated healthy absolute performance over time.
- This strategy currently provides a dividend yield of above 3%, with over 90% of the Fund's holdings paying a dividend. We continue to focus on companies with clear balance sheet and more attractive valuations than the average Canadian small/mid cap company, while providing more diversification.

Sources: Bloomberg Finance L.P. and Picton Mahoney Asset Management, as at September 30, 2019.

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