Irving H. Picard v. Saul B. Katz et al
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EXHIBIT 21

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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

In re: **BERNARD L. MADOFF INVESTMENT SECURITIES LLC,** **Debtor,**	**Adv. Pro. No. 08-01789 (BRL)** **SIPA LIQUIDATION** **(Substantively Consolidated)** **Adv. Pro. No. 10-5287 (BRL)**
IRVING H. PICARD, Trustee for the Liquidation of Bernard L. Madoff Investment Securities LLC, **Plaintiff,** **v.** **SAUL B. KATZ, et al.,** **Defendants.**	**11-CV-03605 (JSR) (HBP)**

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Madoff tops charts; skeptics ask how

By Michael Ocrant

Mention Bernard L. Madoff Investment Securities to anyone working on Wall Street at any time over the last 40 years and you're likely to get a look of immediate recognition.

After all, Madoff Securities, with its 600 major brokerage clients, is ranked as one of the top three market makers in Nasdaq stocks, cites itself as probably the largest source of order flow for New York Stock Exchange-listed securities, and remains a huge player in the trading of preferred, convertible and other specialized securities instruments.

Beyond that, Madoff operates one of the most successful "third markets" for trading equities after regular exchange hours, and is an active market maker in the European and Asian equity markets. And with a group of partners, it is leading an effort and developing the technology for a new electronic auction market trading system called Primex.

But it's a safe bet that relatively few Wall Street professionals are aware that Madoff Securities could be categorized as perhaps the best risk-adjusted hedge fund portfolio manager for the last dozen years. Its $6–7 billion in assets under management, provided primarily by three feeder funds, currently would put it in the number one or two spot in the Zurich (formerly MAR) database of more than 1,100 hedge funds, and would place it at or near the top of any well-known database in existence defined by assets.

More important, perhaps, most of those who are aware of Madoff's status in the hedge fund world are baffled by the way the firm has obtained such consistent, nonvolatile returns month after month and year after year.

Madoff has reported positive returns for the last 11-plus years in assets managed on behalf of the feeder fund known as Fairfield Sentry, which in providing capital for the program since 1989 has been doing it longer than any of the other feeder funds. Those other funds have demonstrated equally positive track records using the same strategy for much of that period.

Lack of volatility

Those who question the consistency of the returns, though not necessarily the ability to generate the gross and net returns reported, include current and former traders, other money managers, consultants, quantitative analysts and fund-of-funds executives, many of whom are familiar with the so-called split-strike conversion strategy used to manage the assets.

These individuals, more than a dozen in all, offered their views, speculation and opinions on the condition that they wouldn't be identified. They noted that others who use or have used the strategy—described as buying a basket of stocks closely correlated to an index, while concurrently selling out-of-the-money call options on the index and buying out-of-the-money put options on the index—are known to have had nowhere near the same degree of success.

The strategy is generally described as putting on a "collar" in an attempt to limit gains compared to the benchmark index in an up market and, likewise, limit losses to something less than the benchmark in a down market, essentially creating a floor and a ceiling.

Madoff's strategy is designed around multiple stock baskets made up of 30–35 stocks most correlated to the S&P 100 index. In marketing material issued by Fairfield Sentry, the sale of the calls is described as increasing "the standstill rate of return, while allowing upward movement of the stock portfolio to the

strike price of the calls." The puts, according to the same material, are "funded in large part by the sale of the calls, [and] limit the portfolio's downside.

"A bullish or bearish bias can be achieved by adjusting the strike prices of the options, overweighting the puts, or underweighting the calls. However, the underlying value of the S&P 100 puts is always approximately equal to that of the portfolio of stocks," the marketing document concludes.

Throughout the entire period Madoff has managed the assets, the strategy, which claims to use OTC options almost entirely, has appeared to work with remarkable results.

Again, take the Fairfield Sentry fund as the example. It has reported losses of no more than 55 basis points in just four of the past 139 consecutive months, while generating highly consistent gross returns of slightly more than 1.5% a month and net annual returns roughly in the range of 15.0%.

Among all the funds on the database in that same period, the Madoff/Fairfield Sentry fund would place at number 16 if ranked by its absolute cumulative returns.

Among 423 funds reporting returns over the last five years, most with less money and shorter track records, Fairfield Sentry would be ranked at 240 on an absolute return basis and come in number 10 if measured by risk-adjusted return as defined by its Sharpe ratio.

What is striking to most observers is not so much the annual returns—which, though considered somewhat high for the strategy, could be attributed to the firm's market making and trade execution capabilities—but the ability to provide such smooth returns with so little volatility.

The best known entity using a similar strategy, a publicly traded mutual fund dating from 1978 called Gateway, has experienced far greater volatility and lower returns during the same period.

The capital overseen by Madoff through Fairfield Sentry has a cumulative compound net return of 397.5%. Compared with the 41 funds in the Zurich database that reported for the same historical period, from July 1989 to February 2001, it would rank as the best performing fund for the period on a risk-adjusted basis, with a Sharpe ratio of 3.4 and a standard deviation of 3.0%. (Ranked strictly by standard deviation, the Fairfield Sentry funds would come in at number three, behind two other market neutral funds.)

Questions abound

Bernard Madoff, the principal and founder of the firm who is widely known as Bernie, is quick to note that one reason so few might recognize Madoff Securities as a hedge fund manager is because the firm makes no claim to being one.

The acknowledged Madoff feeder funds—New York-based Fairfield Sentry and Tremont Advisors' Broad Market; Kingate, operated by FIM of London; and Swiss-based Thema—derive all the incentive fees generated by the program's returns (there are no management fees), provide all the administration and marketing for them, raise the capital and deal with investors, says Madoff.

Madoff Securities' role, he says, is to provide the investment strategy and execute the trades, for which it generates commission revenue.

[Madoff Securities also manages money in the program allocated by an unknown number of endowments, wealthy individuals and family offices. While Bernie Madoff refuses to reveal total assets under management, he does not dispute that the figure is in the range of $6 billion to $7 billion.]

Madoff compares the firm's role to a private managed account at a broker-dealer, with the broker-dealer providing investment ideas or strategies and executing the trades and making money off the account by charging commission on each trade.

Skeptics who express a mixture of amazement, fascination and curiosity about the program wonder, first, about the relative complete lack of volatility in the reported monthly returns.

But among other things, they also marvel at the seemingly astonishing ability to time the market and

move to cash in the underlying securities before market conditions turn negative; and the related ability to buy and sell the underlying stocks without noticeably affecting the market.

In addition, experts ask why no one has been able to duplicate similar returns using the strategy and why other firms on Wall Street haven't become aware of the fund and its strategy and traded against it, as has happened so often in other cases; why Madoff Securities is willing to earn commissions off the trades but not set up a separate asset management division to offer hedge funds directly to investors and keep all the incentive fees for itself, or conversely, why it doesn't borrow the money from creditors, who are generally willing to provide leverage to a fully hedged portfolio of up to seven to one against capital at an interest rate of Libor-plus, and manage the funds on a proprietary basis.

These same skeptics speculate that at least part of the returns must come from other activities related to Madoff's market making. They suggest, for example, that the bid-ask spreads earned through those activities may at times be used to "subsidize" the funds.

According to this view, the benefit to Madoff Securities is that the capital provided by the funds could be used by the firm as "pseudo equity," allowing it either to use a great deal of leverage without taking on debt, or simply to conduct far more market making by purchasing additional order flow than it would otherwise be able to do.

And even among the four or five professionals who express both an understanding of the strategy and have little trouble accepting the reported returns it has generated, a majority still expresses the belief that, if nothing else, Madoff must be using other stocks and options rather than only those in the S&P 100.

Bernie Madoff is willing to answer each of those inquiries, even if he refuses to provide details about the trading strategy he considers proprietary information.

And in a face-to-face interview and several telephone interviews, Madoff sounds and appears genuinely amused by the interest and attention aimed at an asset management strategy designed to generate conservative, low risk returns that he notes are nowhere near the top results of well-known fund managers on an absolute return basis.

Lack of volatility illusory

The apparent lack of volatility in the performance of the fund, Madoff says, is an illusion based on a review of the monthly and annual returns. On an intraday, intraweek and intramonth basis, he says, "the volatility is all over the place," with the fund down by as much as 1%.

But as whole, the split-strike conversion strategy is designed to work best in bull markets and, Madoff points out, until recently "we've really been in a bull market since '82, so this has been a good period to do this kind of stuff."

Market volatility, moreover, is the strategy's friend, says Madoff, as one of the fundamental ideas is to exercise the calls when the market spikes, which with the right stock picks would add to the performance.

In the current bearish environment, when some market experts think the fund should have been showing negative returns, albeit at levels below the benchmark index, managing the strategy has become more difficult, says Madoff, although performance has remained positive or, as in February, flat.

The worst market to operate in using the strategy, he adds, would be a protracted bear market or "a flat, dull market." In a stock market environment similar to what was experienced in the 1970s, for instance, the strategy would be lucky to return "T-bill like returns."

Market timing and stock picking are both important for the strategy to work, and to those who express astonishment at the firm's ability in those areas, Madoff points to long experience, excellent technology that provides superb and low-cost execution capabilities, good proprietary stock and options pricing models, well-established infrastructure, market making ability and market intelligence derived from the massive amount of order flow it handles each day.

The strategy and trading, he says, are done mostly by signals from a proprietary "black box" system

that allows for human intervention to take into account the "gut feel" of the firm's professionals. "I don't want to get on an airplane without a pilot in the seat," says Madoff. "I only trust the autopilot so much."

As for the specifics of how the firm manages risk and limits the market impact of moving so much capital in and out of positions, Madoff responds first by saying, "I'm not interested in educating the world on our strategy, and I won't get into the nuances of how we manage risk." He reiterates the undisputed strengths and advantages the firm's operations provide that make it possible.

Multiple stock baskets

Avoiding market impact by trading the underlying securities, he says, is one of the strategy's primary goals. This is done by creating a variety of stock baskets, sometimes as many as a dozen, with different weightings that allow positions to be taken or unwound slowly over a one- or two-week period.

Madoff says the baskets comprise the most highly capitalized liquid securities in the market, making the entry and exit strategies easier to manage.

He also stresses that the assets used for the strategy are often invested in Treasury securities as the firm waits for specific market opportunities. He won't reveal how much capital is required to be deployed at any given time to maintain the strategy's return characteristics, but does say that "the goal is to be 100% invested."

The inability of other firms to duplicate his firm's success with the strategy, says Madoff, is attributable, again, to its highly regarded operational infrastructure. He notes that one could make the same observation about many businesses, including market making firms.

Many major Wall Street broker-dealers, he observes, previously attempted to replicate established market making operations but gave up trying when they realized how difficult it was to do so successfully, opting instead to acquire them for hefty sums.

[Indeed, says Madoff, the firm itself has received numerous buyout offers but has so far refused any entreaties because he and the many members of his immediate and extended family who work there continue to enjoy what they do and the independence it allows and have no desire to work for someone else.]

Similarly, he adds, another firm could duplicate the strategy in an attempt to get similar results, but its returns would likely be unmatched because "you need the physical plant and a large operation" to do it with equal success. However, many Wall Street firms, he says, do use the strategy in their proprietary trading activities, but they don't devote more capital to such operations because their return on capital is better used in other operations.

Setting up a proprietary trading operation strictly for the strategy, or a separate asset management division in order to collect the incentive fees, says Madoff, would conflict with his firm's primary business of market making.

Commissions suffice

"We're perfectly happy making the commissions" by trading for the funds, he says, which industry observers note also gives the firm the entirely legitimate opportunity to "piggyback" with proprietary trading that is given an advantage by knowing when and where orders are being placed.

Setting up a division to offer funds directly, says Madoff, is not an attractive proposition simply because he and the firm have no desire to get involved in the administration and marketing required for the effort, nor to deal with investors.

Many parts of the firm's operations could be similarly leveraged, he notes, but the firm generally believes in concentrating on its core strengths and not overextending itself. Overseeing the capital provided by the funds and its managed accounts, he says, provides another fairly stable stream of revenue that offers some degree of operational diversification.

Madoff readily dismisses speculation concerning the use of the capital as "pseudo equity" to support the firm's market making activities or provide leverage. He says the firm uses no leverage, and has more than enough capital to support its operations.

He notes that Madoff Securities has virtually no debt and at any given time no more than a few hundred million dollars of inventory.

Since the firm makes markets in only the most highly capitalized, liquid stocks generally represented by the S&P 500 index, a majority of which are listed on the NYSE, as well as the 200 most highly capitalized Nasdaq-listed stocks, says Madoff, it has almost no inventory risk.

Finally, Madoff calls ridiculous the conjecture that the firm at times provides subsidies generated by its market making activities to smooth out the returns of the funds in a symbiotic relationship related to its use of the capital as a debt or equity substitute. He agrees that the firm could easily borrow the money itself at a fairly low interest rate if it were needed, and would therefore have no reason to share its profits. "Why would we do that?"

Still, when the many expert skeptics were asked by MAR/Hedge to respond to the explanations about the funds, the strategy and the consistently low volatility returns, most continued to express bewilderment and indicated they were still grappling to understand how such results have been achieved for so long.

Madoff, who believes that he deserves "some credibility as a trader for 40 years," says: "The strategy is the strategy and the returns are the returns." He suggests that those who believe there is something more to it and are seeking an answer beyond that are wasting their time.