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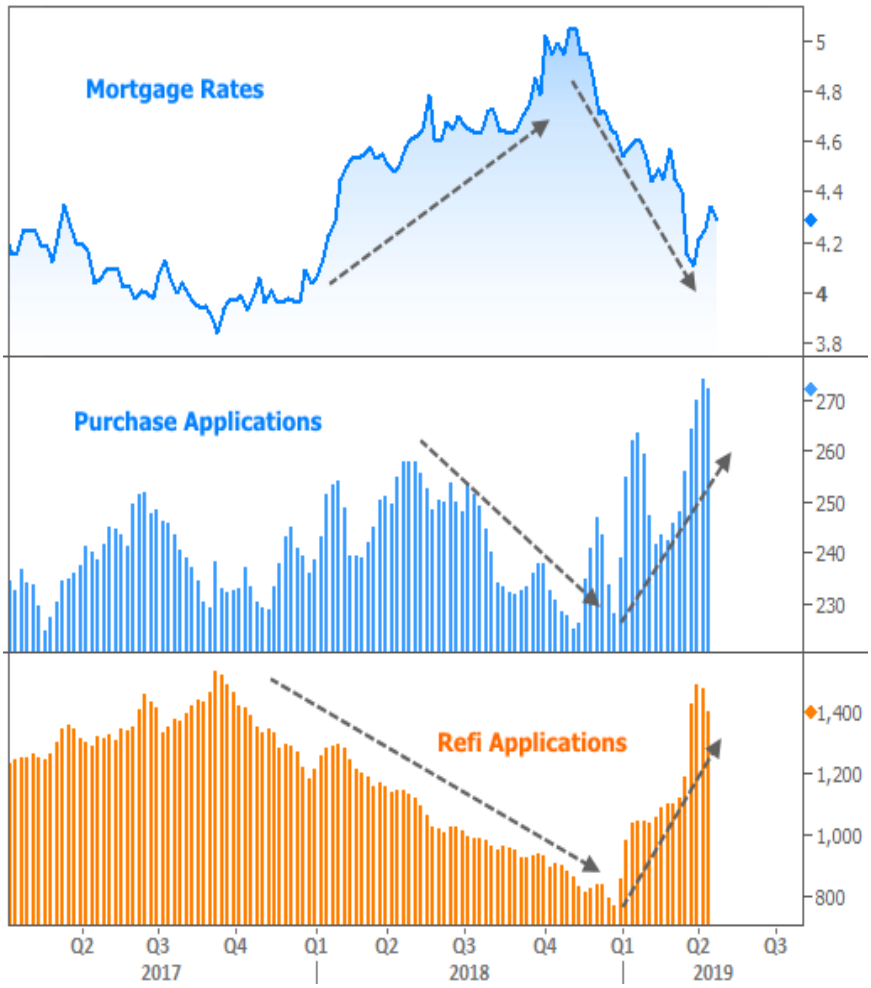
Housing Market Gearing Up For a Big Week Ahead

To understand what's at stake in the week ahead, we need to understand where we are and where we've been. With that in mind, here's a **quick recap** of the past year or so in global macroeconomics.

Rates were near long-term highs in the first part of 2018 following the passage of the tax bill and generally strong economic data. As seen in the following charts, this took a toll on loan applications, home sales and eventually on **home values**.



National Average Mortgage Rates



Mortgage News Daily	Rate	Change	Points
30YR Fixed	7.29%	+0.03	0.00
15YR Fixed	6.93%	+0.11	0.00
30YR FHA	6.97%	+0.02	0.00
30YR Jumbo	7.40%	0.00	0.00
7/6 SOFR	6.68%	+0.08	0.00
30YR VA	6.99%	+0.03	0.00

Rates as of: 11/27

MBS and Treasury

	Price / Yield	Change
MBS UMBS 6.0	99.65	-0.24
10 YR Treasury	4.9345	+0.0755
30 YR Treasury	5.3271	+0.0792

Pricing as of: 11/27 5:59PM EST

Recent Housing Data

		Value	Change
Mortgage Apps	Nov 18	212	+6.11%
Building Permits	Oct	1.3M	-7.5%
Housing Starts	Oct	1.31M	+7.21%
New Home Sales	Oct	701K	+3.7%
Pending Home Sales	Oct	63	-4.69%
Existing Home Sales	Oct	3.99M	+0.25%
Builder Confidence	Nov	25	-13.79%

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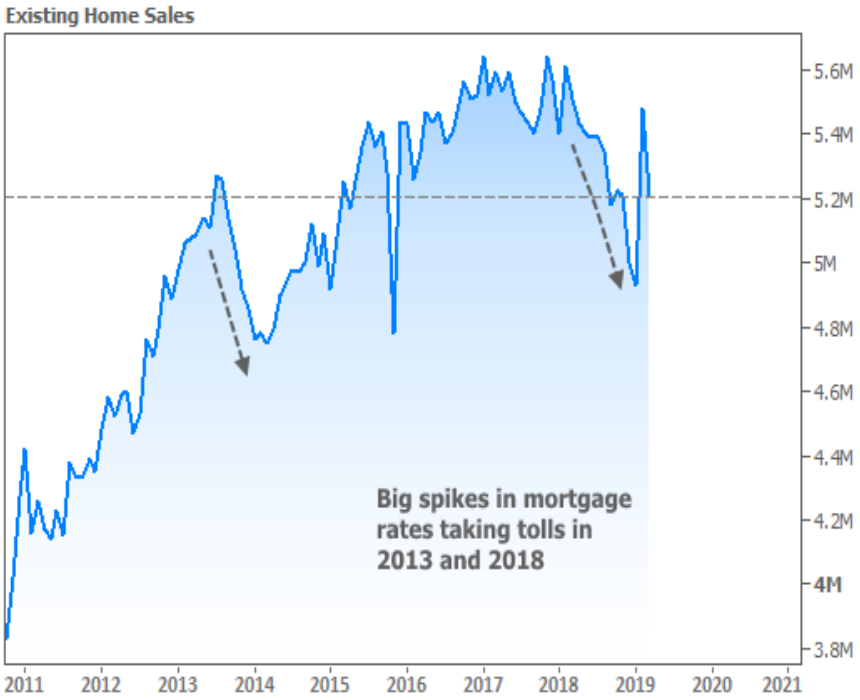

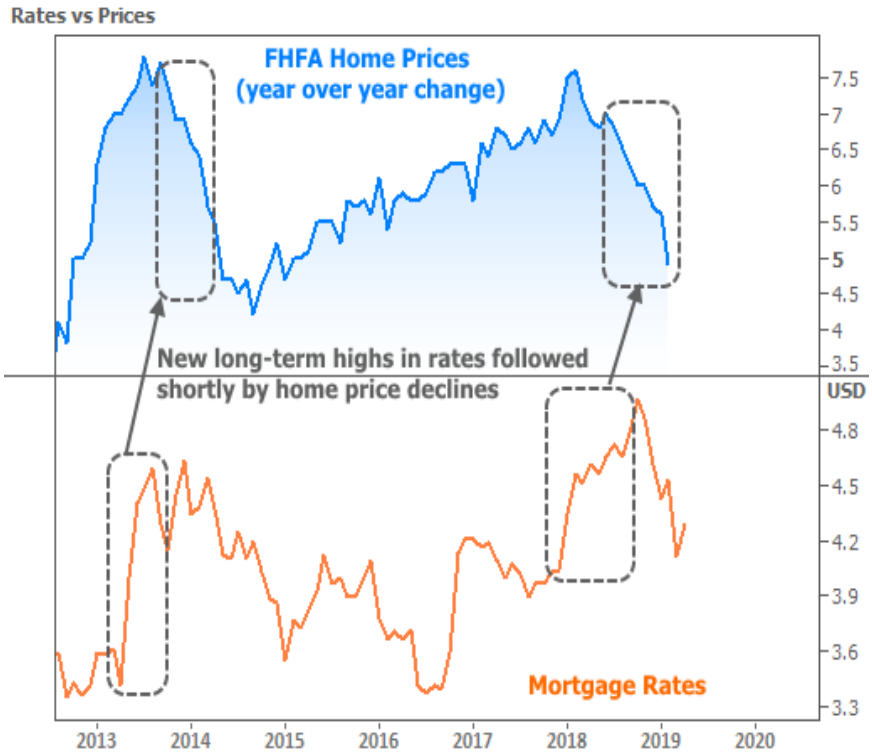

Rates surged to new long term highs in October and November due to ongoing improvement in US econ data among other things. At the same time, concerns were mounting about economic contractions in Europe and China. The following chart shows how debt yields (a proxy for economic momentum) were falling in those two economies while US yields were still rising.

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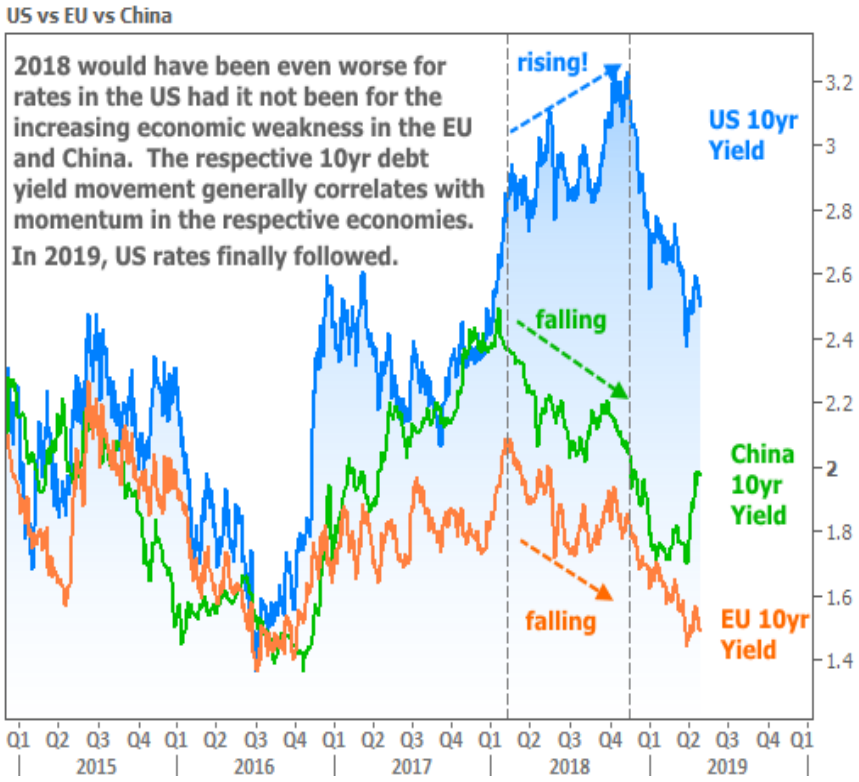
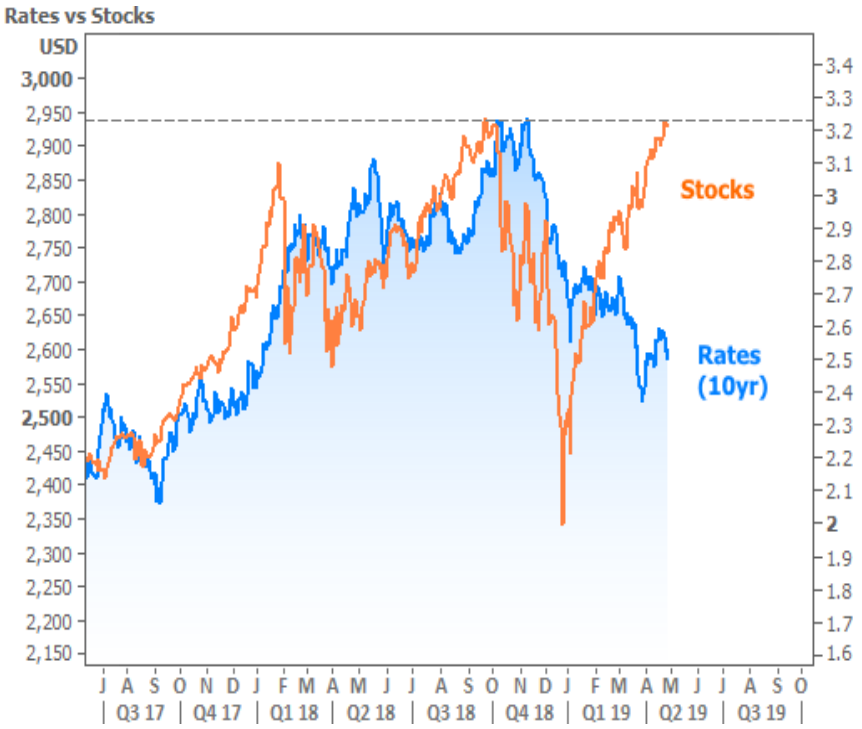


Eventually, the slump in foreign economies combined with a tough stance on rates from the Fed led US markets to follow suit. Stocks and rates **dropped abruptly** before the Fed stepped in and drastically softened its tone in January. That helped stocks recover and kept the good times rolling for rates (a softer tone from the Fed means rate hikes are less likely).



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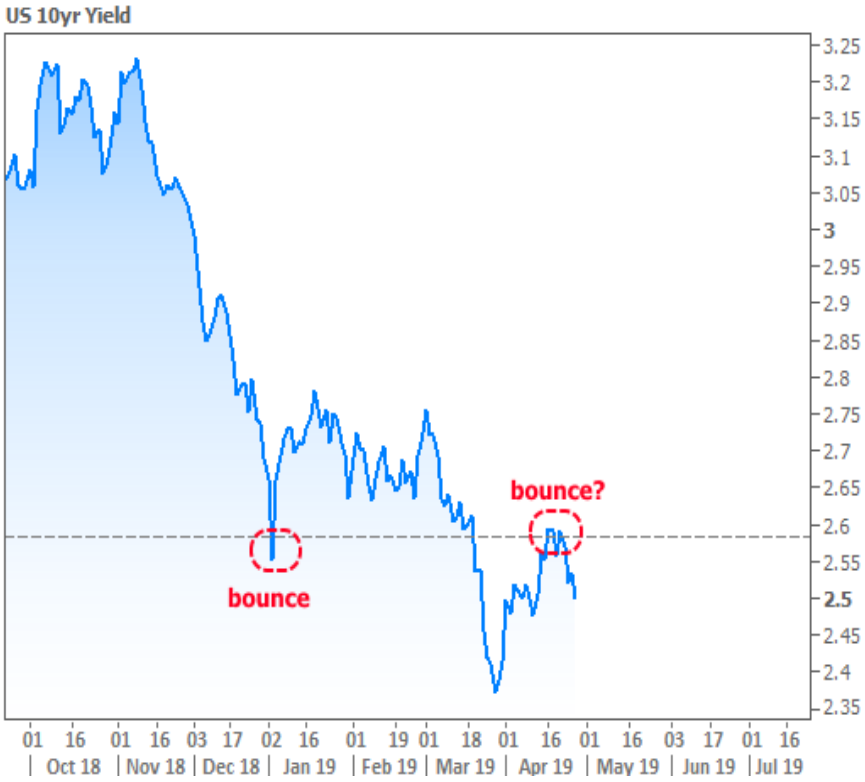
For several reasons, rates surged **even lower** by the end of March--so low that a correction was likely. It's **that** move higher in rates that we've been discussing for the past few weeks and it got even more interesting this week. Long story short, rates have been willing to recover a bit and hold their ground inside the new, lower range achieved in March. Until this week, it looked like they might be moving back into 2019's previous range.



Throughout this volatile move, interest rates have been settling into a relationship with economic data. At times, it's been **too hot** (i.e. rates have been overly reactive) or **too cold** (i.e. rates haven't cared about some reports that normally matter). Recently, it's been **just right** (i.e. rates are paying close attention to the data, but the reactions have been tempered).

One reason for tempered reactions is that we haven't had a ton of important economic data in the past few weeks. But that all changes next week. Not only is the calendar packed on any given day, but the reports in question are typically the biggest market movers.

In and of itself, that would be enough reason to plan for potential volatility, but the data will also be joined by the Fed with a **new policy announcement** on Wednesday. Given how surprised markets were by the March 20th announcement, there's a decent chance of meaningful changes in next week's update.

Of course, the Fed **could** end up being interpreted as fairly neutral and the economic reports could be the right mix of stronger and weaker such that rates don't end up too far from current levels. But if the data is **unified** in its message, and **especially** if the Fed's message is in the same vein, it would likely result in the **biggest move in rates** in more than a month, for better (in the case of a friendly Fed and weak economic data) or worse (in the case of a hawkish Fed and strong data).

After Wednesday, all eyes will be Friday's big data combo with the jobs report 830am ET (Non-farm payrolls) and ISM's Non-Manufacturing index at 10am.

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Recent Economic Data

Event Importance:

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Date	Event	Actual	Forecast	Prior
Monday, Apr 22				
10:00AM	Mar Existing home sales (ml)	5.21	5.30	5.51
10:00AM	Mar Exist. home sales % chg (%)	-4.9	-3.8	11.8
Tuesday, Apr 23				
9:00AM	Feb Monthly Home Price yy (%)	4.9		5.6
9:00AM	Feb Monthly Home Price mm (%)	0.3		0.6
10:00AM	Mar New home sales-units mm (ml)	0.692	0.650	0.667
10:00AM	Mar New home sales chg mm (%)	4.5	-2.5	4.9
Wednesday, Apr 24				
7:00AM	w/e Mortgage Refinance Index	1293.0		1453.0
7:00AM	w/e MBA Purchase Index	269.3		280.7
Thursday, Apr 25				
8:30AM	Mar Durable goods (%)	2.7	0.8	-1.6
8:30AM	w/e Jobless Claims (k)	230	214	192
Friday, Apr 26				
8:30AM	Q1 GDP Advance (%)	3.2	2.0	2.2
10:00AM	Apr Consumer Sentiment (ip)	97.2	97.0	96.9
Monday, Apr 29				
8:30AM	Mar Core PCE Inflation (y/y) (%)	+1.6	1.7	1.7
Tuesday, Apr 30				
9:00AM	Feb CaseShiller 20 yy (%)	+3.0	3.2	3.6
9:45AM	Apr Chicago PMI	52.6	59.0	58.7
10:00AM	Mar Pending Sales Index	105.8		101.9
10:00AM	Mar Pending Home Sales (%)	+3.8	1.1	-1.0
10:00AM	Apr Consumer confidence	129.2	126.0	124.1
Wednesday, May 01				
7:00AM	w/e Mortgage Refinance Index	1228.3		1293.0
7:00AM	w/e MBA Purchase Index	259.4		269.3
8:15AM	Apr ADP National Employment (k)	+275	180	129
10:00AM	Apr ISM Manufacturing PMI	52.8	55.0	55.3
10:00AM	Mar Construction spending (%)	-0.9	0.1	1.0
2:00PM	N/A FOMC rate decision (%)	2.25 - 2.50	2.375	2.375
Thursday, May 02				
8:30AM	Q1 Labor Costs Preliminary (%)	-0.9	1.5	2.0
8:30AM	Q1 Productivity Preliminary (%)	3.6	2.2	1.9
8:30AM	w/e Jobless Claims (k)	230	215	230
9:45AM	Apr ISM-New York index	882.8		869.1
10:00AM	Mar Factory orders mm (%)	+1.9	1.5	-0.5
Friday, May 03				

No Stars = Insignificant
☆ Low
★ Moderate
★★ Important
★★ Very Important

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Date	Event	Actual	Forecast	Prior
8:30AM	Apr Non-farm payrolls (k)	+263	185	196
8:30AM	Apr Unemployment rate mm (%)	3.6	3.8	3.8
10:00AM	Apr ISM N-Mfg PMI	55.5	57.0	56.1

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