

CBS BEEFS UP MAGNUM'S BEEFCAKE PART

By TIM BOXER

TOP-rated CBS has admitted defeat in the Thursday-night arena, dominated by NBC's *The Cosby Show*.

"We won't take on *Cosby*," says Harvey Shephard, CBS' programming chief.

"*Cosby* is too strong." (TUE)

So the network's leaving *Magnum, P.I.* in its usual 8-9 p.m. slot to fend for itself in the ratings race against Bill Cosby.

"There's no doubt *Cosby* has hurt *Magnum*," Shephard says. "And we expect *Cosby* to continue its strong performance." P. 69

Still, CBS which is getting some tough competition from upwardly mobile NBC — now ranked in second place — has to do something to protect its territory.

To give *Magnum* a shot against *Cosby* and *Family Ties*, the detective drama will be revamped, and Tom Selleck's beefcake role as

Magnum will be beefed up.

Selleck, who has deferred to John Hillerman (who plays Higgins) in some episodes, "will be alive in every show," Shephard promises. "He will no longer be a bookcase for Higgins." They'll also use more guest stars on the series.

Shephard says he's more optimistic about the chances of *Simon & Simon* surviving against the new spinoff *Dynasty II: The Colbys* at 9 on Thursday nights.

"Historically, a new primetime soap is introduced at 10 and later moved to 9," he says. "Never has a soap been able to start off immediately at 9. It's hard to believe that *Dynasty II* will take off."

Another weak spot for CBS is Wednesdays. The network will tackle that by becoming "more aggressive with an entirely new

schedule."

To offset "NBC's two-hour sermon" (*Highway to Heaven* and *Hell Town*) and "ABC's *Dynasty* and *The Insiders*, which he calls a "a rip-off" of *Miami Vice*, Shephard has installed a block of new comedies — *Stir Crazy*, *Charlie & Co.*, and *George Burns' Comedy Week*.

He also has overhauled the network's Tuesday evening schedule, making it a "ladies night" by installing the new sitcom *Hometown*, which will be followed by a movie.

"*Hometown* plays to urban, sophisticated audiences with primary appeal to women," Shephard says. "The movie of the week that follows will also appeal to them."

He's confident that *Dallas* will again reign supreme on Friday nights, especially opposite NBC's *Misfits of Science*. That show is

about a bunch of misfits who are turned into crime-fighting superheroes through scientific means.

"What Brandon Tartikoff (NBC Entertainment chief) has done, is try to get *The A-Team* and *Manimal* to merge [in *Misfits*].

"When you take a positive force [the hit *A-Team*] and a negative force [the flop *Manimal*] you end up with a negative.

"And I think that's what's going to happen to *Misfits*."

If Tuesday night will be ladies night, then Shephard is gearing Saturday night to the men.

"Most of our movies will be male-oriented on Saturday nights," he says. "ABC's Robert Wagner show (*J.G. Culver*) and *The Love Boat* is tough competition. But people do watch movies on Saturday night and I think we should do well."



Tom Selleck's got tough job tackling NBC's "Cosby."

MOM

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will be returning to series TV in a new

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