

# High-caliber 'Magnum' aiming for 'Dynasty'

(Tel)  
By MARIANNE GOLDSTEIN

LOS ANGELES — It's not that Tom Selleck is unhappy that CBS is trying to pump some new life into his six-year-old show, "Magnum, P.I." — it's just that he's not 100 percent sure that'll he wants to be around to enjoy the success if the show goes to an eighth season.

"It's a little early to tell what's going to be, but I haven't closed my mind to the possibility of an eighth season," said Selleck, whose high-priced seven-year contract is up at the end of this TV year.

"It was real important to me to live up to the terms of my contract. CBS and Universal have been more than fair with me — they pay me a lot of money, they renegotiated my deal, so for me to slip or slide out of that commitment would be completely unethical.

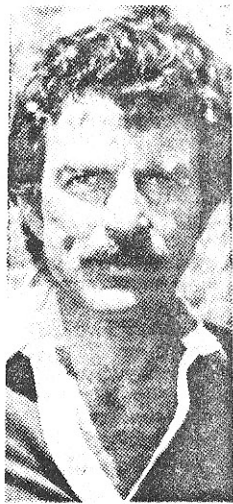
"I'm really looking forward to this season and seeing this whole little scenario unfolding and see what happens."

Selleck — who, statistically is said to be the second most popular performer on television (behind his former competition, Bill Cosby) — came to LA

from Hawaii to talk to a national meeting of TV writers, and admitted that for small screen stars "it's always a question of when a show is going to be over, not if the show will last forever.

"Being a worse-case planner, I've always contemplated life after 'Magnum,'" he said. "I would like to do the seventh year and make it the best we've done."

This last year has been a most difficult one for the show that spent the last two sea-



**TOM SELLECK**  
*Lucky seven?*

sons pitted against "The Cosby Show," and has been juggled around the schedule in the last few months.

Next season it will be seen Wednesday nights at 9 p.m., opposite ABC's "Dynasty" and two NBC sitcoms ("Gimme a Break" and "You Again?").

CBS has already announced plans to do crossovers between "Magnum" and two other CBS shows, "Murder She Wrote" and "The Equalizer." Selleck says he's looking forward to both experiences, neither of which he sees as network hype.

"I've always resisted crossovers that were just gimmicks," Selleck said. "I respond to a good story. Both crossovers are, I think, real interesting ideas in terms of chemistry.

"I'd kill to work with either one of those actors ("Murder" star Angela Lansbury and Edward Woodward of "The Equalizer"), so they're not gimmicks to help the ratings. I think the audience will respond to it and I think it'll be good for us."

Selleck continually stressed what he felt was the high quality of his show, noting that " 'Magnum' got where it was not because it was a show with a red Ferrari and some dogs and me taking off my clothes, but because the scripts were good and it's a show about people' ."

One of those people — unseen on the show thus far — is the character of Robin Masters, the mysterious owner of the palatial estate where Magnum lives, and owner of the notorious red Ferrari. Selleck says that fans of the show will get to learn more about Masters this season and that it might become "an ongoing subplot" in the show. (The voice of Masters, heard in phone conversations, was done by the late Orson Welles, and Selleck said he was unsure who, if anyone, would be a replacement).

But unlike "Dallas" and "Simon & Simon" — both undergoing facelifts for the fall — Selleck promised that on his show, "There won't be any changes for the sake of change; 'Magnum' has always evolved. There won't be an overall sense of a change in style."

And while he feels that CBS has always been enthusiastic about the program, he admits to having had some problems with competing against the super-successful "Cosby Show."

"I get letters that say, 'I love your show, so I watch Bill Cosby and tape yours.' I've written back to a few and said, 'Can you watch ours — especially if you have a Nielsen box on your TV — and tape Cosby for a while?'"

— MARIANNE GOLDSTEIN