‘Magnum’ Packs A Wallop

MCA TV has broken all the dollar records in syndication with its sale to stations of “Magnum, P.I.” (Variety, Nov. 9). Within five weeks of its introduction into the marketplace, “Magnum” has soared over the $1,000,000-an-episode mark. (PCL)

Syndication experts say only two other series have crossed the magic $1,000,000-an-episode syndication threshold: ITC Entertainment’s “The Muppet Show” and 20th-Fox TV’s “Mash.” But ITC sold 14 runs of each “Muppet Show” half-hour instead of the six runs MCA is making available of each “Magnum” episode, and “Mash” didn’t hit the $1,000,000 mark until Fox went back to the stations to renew the series for a second syndication go-round, five years after the initial sale.

Stations in 53 markets have bought “Magnum,” and syndication-series records have fallen in most of those cities. The six runs of each “Magnum” hour become available to stations in the fall of 1986 for about a 50-month period.

With 129 “Magnum” episodes in the first sale to stations, sources say MCA will reach a total gross of $150,000,000 by the end of the month.