

FAR FROM FINAL

"Magnum's" oddly unfunny finale left plenty of room for more. (feld)

RICHARD Kimble was cleared of his wife's murder. Hawkeye Pierce saw the Korean War end and went home, shaken and very stirred. Mary Richards turned out the lights and left the WJM newsroom forever.

And last Sunday on "Magnum, P.I.," as the latest TV character to say a planned and proper farewell, Thomas Magnum cut his hair and cut out for the Navy. The two-hour finale of "Magnum, P.I.," coming eight years after the show premiered on CBS, wasn't really a final chapter at all.



BY DAVID BIANCULLI

John Hillerman's Higgins admitting to "being" Robin Masters, then recanted his confession; instead of dying, which Magnum had done in the original version of last season's intended finale, Magnum simply re-upped in the Navy, presumably with his newly-found young daughter in tow.

This ending, of course, paves the way for a telemovie sequel in a few years — called, perhaps, "One Man and a Child."

Selleck is due other successes, and deserves sincere praise regarding "Magnum, P.I." for his on-screen performance and off-screen production duties, both of which were of a higher caliber than the show could have hoped.

For the finale, though, Selleck basically played hosts, and watched as a parade of familiar faces from past episodes popped in for glorified cameo appearances. It was too busy, too disconnected, and, for "Magnum, P.I.," oddly unfunny.

And even the subplots were left unresolved. Did Rick (Larry Manetti) marry Cleo (Phyllis Davis)? The epi-



GRAND MARSHAL: Tom Selleck played host to a parade of familiar faces in a busy and disconnected final show.

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sode ended with a freeze-frame, stopping just before his "I do." No crime was wrapped up, no explanation was given for what Magnum's daughter would do while he rejoined the military.
As a finale, it was far from final. Last year's "finale," actually, was far superior as a closing chapter. Although "Magnum, P.I." now joins that

rather exclusive club of shows providing a fitting conclusion, but with "Magnum," it's a pretty loose fit.
Of the series providing finales, "The Prisoner" still ranks as the most satisfying — followed, in order, by "The Mary Tyler Moore Show," "The Fugitive," "Hill Street Blues," "M*A*S*H," "The Paper Chase," and now "Magnum, P.I."

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