

Pirates revive, win 7-1

By M. Howard Gelfand
Staff Writer

Pittsburgh, Pa.

Desperately short of pitchers and interrupted by death, the Pittsburgh Pirates avoided elimination from the World Series with a 7-1 victory over Baltimore Sunday.

Down three games to one, Manager Chuck Tanner had no one to turn to in the final innings except Bert Blyleven. Blyleven was pitching with only two days of rest, but he wound up pitching four shutout innings — nothing new for him, except that these were the final four innings.

Blyleven, unaccustomed to seeing the end of a game from the mound — he finished only four of the 37 games he started this season — ended up the winner when Baltimore fell apart after taking a 1-0 lead into the sixth.

While the disco music blared in the Pirate clubhouse, only soft voices filled Tanner's office. His 70-year-old mother, Anne, had died earlier in the day.

There was none of the win-one-for-the-Gipper sentimentality that surrounded the Series last year when Jim Gilliam, the Dodger coach, died. There was a moment of silence before the game, but it wasn't until afterward that Tanner admitted it had been difficult to concentrate.

But, he said, "You're supposed to cry when you're born and you're supposed to be happy when you die. Most us do it in the reverse. You've got to be strong mentally and you have sadness in your heart, but you've got to be strong. And I can be strong because the people around me are strong."

The Pirates were strong yesterday amidst circumstances that seemed to

point to their inevitable elimination. Tanner had to start Jim Rooker, a left-hander who won only four games all year. With relievers Don Robinson and Enrique Romo nursing sore arms and with Kent Tekulve recovering from the shelling he absorbed the day before, the Pirates were in even worse shape than the Orioles realized.

And the Orioles figured they were in pretty good shape. The talk on the Baltimore bench before the game was mainly about who would win the Series most valuable player award. "I think Kiko (Garcia) has a pretty good shot if he has a good game today," said catcher Rick Dempsey.

He forgot that the Orioles also had to win.

Rooker, who had pitched only 3½ innings of postseason play, didn't allow a hit until Gary Roenicke doubled to start the fifth. Roenicke eventually

scored to give the Orioles their short-lived lead, but it was a Pyrrhic achievement that symbolized Baltimore's ineffectuality. Roenicke scored when Rich Dauer hit into a double play.

Starter Mike Flanagan, meanwhile, was shutting out the Pirates until Willie Stargell's sacrifice fly and Bill Madlock's single — one of four for the third baseman — gave the Pirates a 2-1 lead in the sixth. Until then, Flanagan had been pitching like a man who had won 23 games this season, but, unbeknownst to the Pirates — and even his own manager — Flanagan was pitching in pain.

Flanagan said he had strained a back muscle while throwing a curve to Dave Parker in the first inning. But, he said, he didn't tell Manager Earl Weaver. "What good could it do

Series continued on page 8C

Series

Continued from page 1C

to talk about it?" he asked.

With the game slipping away, Weaver once again took a laissez-faire approach to baseball management. It didn't work this time.

After Stargell's sacrifice fly tied the game and advanced Dave Parker to third with two outs, the Orioles might have walked Madlock to get to Steve Nicosia. Madlock, after all, owns two National League batting championships. Nicosia was hitting .100 in the Series.

But Flanagan went for Madlock, and Madlock ripped a single into center to score what would be the winning run. It was not a decision that seemed to play heavily on Weaver's mind.

"With first base open, we don't have to give him a good pitch," he explained. Then he asked: "Who was on the mound? Stoddard?" He shrugged when told Flanagan was still pitching.

But it was in the seventh inning that the collapse began. For the first time in the Series, the Orioles looked bad, almost as bad as the Pirates had looked until yesterday.

First, Weaver tried Stoddard, who had pitched so well the day before. Then, he tried Tippy Martinez. Finally it was Don Stanhouse's turn.

Nothing worked. The Pirates, helped by Stoddard's wild pickoff throw and a Tim Foli triple, made it 3-1.

Like most of his teammates, Foli was talking afterward of a Pirate rejuvenation borne of this rare laughter. The word "momentum" even reared its ugly head in the Pittsburgh clubhouse.

Blyleven, however, wasn't laughing. The baby-faced young man who departed Minnesota with a one-finger salute is 28 now, but the stigma hangs on. Can't win the big one. Get him out before he blows it.

The mere mention of the subject sent Blyleven into the trainer's room. "I've had enough," he said, turning his back when asked about his reputation.

But the mood was brighter in other regions of the clubhouse. "All we have to do now is keep playing good country baseball," said Foli. "We haven't played our game until today, but maybe this will turn things around. We're fortunate. We dug our own hole and now it's up to us to get ourselves out of it."

The Pirates dug the Oriole hole a bit deeper in the eighth when they got three more runs, and, for the first time in this Series there was no tension, no drama, when the final out was recorded. There was only the joy of the Pirate fans who flooded the field.

True happiness, however, is still a long shot for the self-proclaimed family. The teams are off today and then play in Baltimore on Tuesday — and, if necessary, on Wednesday.

The Pirates will find Jim Palmer, the three-time Cy Young Award winner, waiting for them tomorrow. If a seventh game is needed, they will face Scott McGregor, who defeated the Pirates in Game Three. Pittsburgh will turn to John Candelaria tomorrow. Candelaria survived only three innings Friday.