Pirates' dream season continues

AP Sports Writer

PITTSBURGH - The low-budget Pittsburgh Pirates were compared to the Mets when the season began — Casey Stengel's 120-loss Mets of 1962.

Now, after another miraculous finish in a highly illogical season, the high-drama Pirates again have the look of the Mets — the Miracle Mets of 1969.

"Everything is like out of a movie - I mean 'Angels of the Outfield' or something," outfielder Al Martin said of the improbable Pirates' latest comeback. "Every time we win one of these, you say, 'Are you kidding me?"

Held to one unearned run in 15 innings and down to their final two outs, the Pirates rallied on successive homers by Joe Randa and Mark Smith off Todd Worrell to beat the Dodgers 4-3 Monday and split their doubleheader. The homers came quickly. Randa

had just sailed a two-run shot over the outstretched glove of center fielder Otis Nixon when Smith hit the next pitch over the left-field wall.

"We hadn't even shaken Randa's hand and Smith hit his," manager Gene Lamont said.

The victory kept the Pirates three games behind Houston in the NL Central. The two teams play five times in the final week of the season.

"It was another storybook finish in a storybook season," Randa said. "I think we're all running out of words to describe what's happening to us this season."

Not that they didn't try. "Unbelievable," Martin said.

"Awesome," catcher Jason Kendall said.

The Pirates' unexpected run at a division title in a season they were forecast to lose 100 games would seem to be dramatic enough. They all but one player making as much Cardinals' Lee Smith.



Pittsburgh Pirates fans give Pirates' give Pirates' Joe Randa, left, and Mark Smith, right, a standing ovation after their back to back homers off Los Angeles Dodgers reliever Todd Worrell. The Pirates are now being compared to the 1969 World Champion New York Mets, which won the World Series after being underdogs.

as \$1 million, while replacing seven of nine starters from their openingday lineup. Manager Jim Leyland left for Florida for the opportunity to manage a winner.

Now, the Pirates are wondering if they are destiny's darlings.

"You watch things happening and you wonder, 'Could this be one of those years?" infielder Dale ter. Sveum said.

Smith's homer might have been the most dramatic in a Pirates' pennant race since Barry Bonds helped secure the 1991 NL East gutted their roster, trading away title with a game-winner off the

biggest of the season. His threesecured the first combined 10inning no-hitter in major-league history for Francisco Cordova and Ricardo Rincon.

It was only the second game-ending homer ever to decide a no-hit-

"I thought that was exciting, but (Monday) was even more exciting," Smith said.

Smith, cast off by both Baltimore them critical. He hit a decisive the comeback.

But it may not have been Smith's two-run homer in the 10th inning off Dennis Eckersley on the Fourth run homer July 12 against Houston of July after Cardinals left fielder Ron Gant misplayed a potential game-ending fly ball.

"You get to the point where it's hard to describe what's happening to us," Randa said,

But there's been more, much

-Down to their last strike against closer Mark Wohlers, the Pirates rallied with four runs in the ninth to win 5-2 in Atlanta on Aug. and San Diego within the last year, 12. Several of Wohlers' pitches has seven homers, nearly all of were clocked at 101 mph during

Williams just one part of a mixed Pirate dugout

By ALAN ROBINSON AP Sports Writer

PITTSBURGH - Eddie Williams supposedly couldn't have played for two more disparate franchises than the anywhere. super-rich Dodgers and the super-thrifty Pirates.

Los Angeles, which traded the first baseman to Pittsburgh on Aug. 9, has the so-called United Nations clubhouse, a mixture of players from five countries that reportedly has had season-long problems developing a positive chemistry. That certainly isn't noticeable in the standings, however

The Pirates, meanwhile, have generated a one-for-all attitude that is refreshing for its sincerity and intensity in an era when players repeatedly jump from club to club to sign for more money.

"These guys are like a bunch of crazed dogs," Williams said. "I saw them on TV a lot before I came here and everybody was always busting their rear end to win. Since I got here, I've seen the same thing in person."

Still, Williams said the muchpublicized problems of blending the Dodgers' widely varying personalities into a team rather than a collection of 25 players with different personal agendas was widely overstated.

"I never saw any bad chemistry over there," said Williams, who was with the Dodgers briefly. "I thought it was a great bunch of guys. I thank the Pirates organization for getting me and giving me a chance to help them win, but I don't have any bad feelings about the son. Dodgers."

MOVING DAY: The Pirates tion players.

technically sent left-hander Chris Peters to Triple-A Calgary on Tuesday to make room on their roster so Jose Silva

could start against the Dodgers. In actuality, Peters isn't going

He will remain with the Pirates and will be reactivated after rosters expand to 40 play-

ers on Monday. Peters' confidence and control were shaky when he was last with the club at midseason.

But Peters mixed up his pitches well in Monday's spot start against the Dodgers — his pitches were clocked variously from 90 to 67 mph - and manager Gene Lamont was extremely pleased with his performance during his spot start

against Los Angeles. Peters lasted six innings, giving up six hits and three unearned runs that resulted from three Pirates errors

MORE MOVING: The Pirates will likely make one other move before the rosters expand by dropping a pitcher — if only for one day — and adding an infielder, likely Carolina shortstop Abraham Nunez. He has progressed offensively far faster than anticipated and likely will spend September with the parent club.

Lamont and general manager Cam Bonifay want to make the move in case the Pirates unexpectedly make the playoffs. A player not on the 25-man roster as of Aug. 31 is not eligible for the playoffs, and the Pirates wouldn't need their 12th pitcher should they reach the postsea-

So, for at least a day, they will carry 11 pitchers and 14 posi-

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Educational awards can be applied to tuition or

All applicants must attend a mandatory information

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Centre County Youth Service Bureau

410 South Fraser Street

State College, PA 16801

session on the evening of Sept. 3 or Sept. 4.

with children and youth preferred.

Application materials can be picked up at:

Commitment of 10 months to 1 year required.

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Wednesday, Aug. 27, 1997: Others hear your message this year. Communications flourish; you are driven to get results. Focus on what you want, then get it. You are active and likely to move around a lot. You tell people what you think, expect and want. Directness is instrumental to your success. Be careful though; you have a tendency to move too quickly and be accident prone! If you are single, a friendship could become a lot more. Another adores you, and wants to be close. This is a superb year for those in relationships. If attached, your union evolves to another level. CANCER is always there for you.

The Stars Show the Kind of Day You'll Have: 5-Dynamic; 4-Positive; 3-Average; 2-So-so; 1-Difficult.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★ Settle in, and handle responsibilities. A partner gives you both financial and emotional feedback. Excellent communications mark a personal matter. It is good that you and family present a unified front. Nurture someone who is confused. Tonight: Entertain at home.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) ★★★★ Don't do anything halfway. Creativity is high, and you can make waves. Partners are responsive to talks; you make headway. Declare more of what you want. Others pick up on your innuendoes. Discussions are animated. Tonight: A smile goes a long way.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) ★★★ You have strong desires; because of that, you are a good creator. Make clear what you want and expect. Build a better sense of direction with a family member. You chatter, and see life from another perspective. Be creative at work. Tonight: Play racquetball, or swim.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ Your dynamic energy draws others. You can get your message through. A loved one takes a strong stand and knows what he expects. Listen to your inner voice when discussing expectations. You say the right words at the right time. Tonight: Let your creative juices flow. LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★ Search your soul before committing yourself to a project. How you view life is considerably different from those around you. Instincts hone in on financial matters. Be direct with family about a change. Discuss your budget. Another animatedly expresses opinions. Tonight: Curl up with a good book.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) ★★★★ Don't mince words; say what you think. Others aren't mind readers; they need to hear your ideas. Emphasize long-term friendships. Go for what you want. Run errands. Conversations are dynamic. Tonight: Be with

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★ Take a stand. Know what you need, and finish work. Answer to another, Expenditures are out of whack; make a concerted effort to make more money. Accumulating funds are a major project. Instincts are right on with work and finances. Tonight: Grab the spotlight! SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

*** Break past barriers. Use your ingenuity to solve problems. Others like your farseeing abilities but do not understand how you see the big picture so differently. A friend comes through for you when you need help. Tonight: Romance

shows up in strange places. SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★ You get an earful from a boss or partner. Delve into the pros and cons of finances. Take the lead by asking insightful and needed questions. Ultimately, it is your decision. Something in particular might make a choice easy; initiate a discussion. Tonight: Be a duo. CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) ★★★★ Listen to a key person, who will

actively pursue your mental perspective. Understand where he is coming from. Another takes a strong stand. Use logic and detachment, if need be. He will eventually come over to your point of view. Tonight: Be a receptive audience. AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) ★★★ Work is a priority as you attempt to make

finances conform to what you want. Ideas flow, and you acquire a different point of view. Realize and honor your limits. You can refuse and be heard. Establish limits; others will respond. Tonight: Run errands on the way home. PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ Your imagination is working overtime now. How you see life could change; you will bend information and make it conform to your thinking. Be more open to feedback from someone who is at a distance. You might need his perspective and insight. Tonight: It's playtime!

BORN TODAY

Actress Barbara Bach (1947), musician Daryl Dragon (1942), actor PeeWee Herman (1952)

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