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Sports Thursday • November 16, 19 Larkin named National League MVP

Larkin is the first shortstop to win the award in 33 years.

NEW YORK (AP) — Barry Larkin was the surprise choice as NL Most Valuable Player on Wednesday, beating out Dante Bichette and Greg Maddux to become the first shortstop to win the award in 33 years.

Maddux, who won his fourth straight Cy Young Award this week, and Bichette, who led the league in home runs and RBIs, were considered the leading candidates.

But rather than pitching or power, voters clearly looked at the all-around contributions Larkin made on and off the field to the NL Central champion Cincinnati Reds, and made him a convincing choice.

Larkin hit .319 with 66 RBIs and 51 steals, is likely to win his second straight Gold Glove next week and was the team's clubhouse leader. He was also the Reds' best player in the

Robert Horry's 3-

pointer at the buzzer

gives Rockets the win.

TORONTO (AP) - Robert

Horry's 3-point shot at the

buzzer lifted the Houston Rock-

ets to a 96-93 victory over the

expansion Toronto Raptors on

Wednesday night.

postseason, although that performance is not considered in the selection.

Larkin, who was on a cruise in Mexico when the award was announced, received 11 first-place votes and finished with 281 points. Bichette, whose 40 homers and 128 RBIs led Colorado to a wild-card playoff spot, got six first-place votes and had 251 points.

Maddux, 19-2 with a 1.63 ERA for the World Series champion Atlanta Braves, got seven first-place votes and 249 points. He is the first pitcher to finish as high as third in the NL MVP voting since Los Angeles reliever Mike Marshall in 1974.

"If you look at sheer numbers, there are guys who have more homers and RBIs," Reds second baseman Bret Boone said. "But it's nice to see people look at 'most valuable.' He was really great on our team. He was our leader.

Dodgers catcher Mike Piazza was fourth, getting three firstplace votes and 214 points. The top four finishers were named

National	League MV	'P	-
Player	1st Place Votes	Total	Ram
Barry Larkin	11	281	AGU CAGU
Dante Bichette	6	251	
Greg Maddux	7	249	All Marine
Mike Piazza	3	214	

on every ballot by members of the Baseball Writers Association of America. Ron Gant, Larkin's teammate, received the only other first-place vote.

Larkin is the first NL shortstop to win the award since Maury Wills in 1962, the season he stole a then-record 102 bases. He is the sixth shortstop to win the honor, joining Ernie Banks (1958-59), Dick Groat (1960) and Marty Marion (1944).

Seaver was runner-up in 1969. The last pitcher to win the N MVP was Bob Gibson in 196 Larkin is the first Reds player to be named MVP since when he had a 1.12 ERA, an George Foster in 1977 and 11th overall. Joe Morgan, Pete Rose some voters have been reluctan to give the award to a pitcher. and Johnny Bench also won in

the 1970s.

Along with leading

league in homers and RBL

Bichette was third in batting.

.340. Some voters, howev

may have discounted his bi

numbers because he played hitter-friendly Coors Field.

centage was the best in hist

for starters with at least 20 d cisions, had the highest fini

for a starting pitcher since Tor

Maddux, whose winning p

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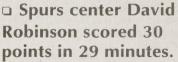
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MINNEAPOLIS (AP) - Vinny Del Negro scored 10 points in San Antonio's decisive 16-4 to start the second half Wednesday night as the Spurs eased to a 105-96 victory over the Minnesota Timberwol

The Raptors, who trailed by as many as 19 points late in the first half, outscored and outhustled the Rockets in the second half, beating them to loose balls and coming up with the key shot when it counted.

Rockets rip Raptors with buzzer beater

Trailing 53-42 at the half, the Raptors slowly chipped away at Houston's lead, taking a 93-92 lead on Tracy Murray's two free throws with 53 seconds left.

Hakeem Olajuwon, who had 17 points and 11 rebounds for the Rockets, hit one of two foul shots to pull the Rockets even at 93-93 with just under 40 seconds. Then, an errant Raptors pass gave the Rockets posession with 19.9 seconds to play. Sam Cassell took the ball up court, dished to Clyde Drexler, who fed to Horry. His shot from 3-

point range caught only net as

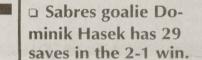
time expired.

The loss was the seventhin row for the struggling Rapter who have played the NBA's ter teams well only to come short.

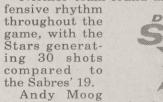
Kenny Smith scored 16 dis 22 points in the first halls cluding three 3-pointers. Damon Stoudamire and

Tabak had 20 points each the Raptors.

Robinson leads Spurs over Timberwolves



BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) -Dominik Hasek had 29 saves and Randy Burridge and Pat LaFontaine each scored a goal to give Buffalo a 2-1 win Wednesday night over the Dallas Stars



and beat Hasek with a quick wrist shot.

Burridge evened the score at 10:13. Burridge intercept ed a Dallas pass, took the puck down the wing, bea Grant Ledyard and puts hard shot past Moog. His s

en goals leads the Sabres. Moog's kick-save robbe Buffalo of a goal with about five minute left in the period Buffalo took the lea at 12:32 of the second period

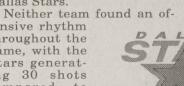
on Pat La Fontaine's goal. Brad May sent a blin pass from be hind the go to Donald Au

Sabres send Stars to

seventh straight loss



dette, who on



Robinson scored 30 points in 29 minutes.

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VISA

David Robinson scored 30 points in just 29 minutes and Avery Johnson had 13 assists for the Spurs, who improved their overall record against Minnesota to 28-3.

Nineteen-year-old rookie Kevin Garnett had his first double-digit game, scoring 19

including six by Garnett, to ge within 85-78.

Wolves with 20 points. Del Negro, who finished

with 16 points, started the sec-ond half with a 3-pointer to

give the Spurs a 60-59 lead. He

hit another 3-pointer in the

run, which saw the Spurs pull

a 85-71 in the third period, but

the Wolves finished the quar-

ter with seven straight points,

San Antonio led by as much

ahead 73-63.

MABERWOLVES

Minnesota trailed by just four points, 91-87, with seven minutes to play before the Spurs rallied to put the game

Minnesota played without center Christian Laettner, who was placed on the injured list points. Tom Gugliotta led the Tuesday with a sprained ankle.

had 17 saves for the Stars. who have gone winless in their last seven games (0-4-

Todd Harvey's goal 2:20 into the first period opened scoring for the Stars. Guy Carbonneau dug the puck off the boards and found Harvey, who skated in unmolested after a Sabres' defensive lapse

timed his pass to LaFontain The Sabres were unable score with a two-man advar tage late in the period, mis ing several goal opportuni

ties. Both teams' penalty-killing units looked strong in the game. Buffalo and Dalla each stopped six power-play chances.

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