Continued from page 6

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Ichiro edges Giambi for MVP

his fourth Most Valuable Player Award, just like Barry Bonds. Only the first three came in Japan.

"There's no way I can compare the MVPs in the two countries," Suzuki said Tuesday after he became only the second rookie MVP in the major leagues. "No matter how many times I won MVP in Japan, that does not mean I could play with total confidence."

Suzuki, who came to the major leagues after nine seasons in Japan's Pacific League, received 11 first-place votes and 289 points to win the American League MVP in balloting by the Baseball Writers' Association of America.

Jason Giambi, last year's AL MVP, got eight first-place votes and 281 points. It was the tightest MVP race since Juan Gonzalez defeated Alex Rodriguez 290-287 for the 1996 AL award and tied for the 10th-narrowest victory margin since MVP awards began in 1931.

"I didn't expect I would be the one to win," Suzuki said through a translator.

The only other rookie to win the MVP was Boston's Fred Lynn in 1975. Last week, Suzuki received 27 of 28 first-place votes in balloting for AL Rookie of the Year.

The 28-year-old outfielder, the first rookie to win a batting title since Tony Oliva in 1964, led the AL with a .350 average and topped the major leagues with 56 stolen bases, impressing voters with his speed and his strong arm. His 242 hits were a rookie record, the most for anyone since Bill Terry's 254 for the 1930 New York Giants.

Suzuki was the Pacific League's MVP in 1994, 1995 and 1996, and won seven batting titles before joining the Mariners and

NEW YORK (AP) — Ichiro Suzuki won becoming the first Japanese non-pitcher in the major leagues.

"A year ago, we made a bid, gasped and held our breath, wondering what this guy really was going to give us," said Lee Pelekoudas, the Mariners' vice president of baseball administration. "Doing it this quickly is amazing. He's done it with dignity and professionalism.'

Past AL MVPs include Lou Gehrig, Ted Williams, Joe DiMaggio and Mickey Mantle, icons for baseball players in Japan as well as North America.

"To be among those great legends, great players, I cannot be a regular, ordinary play-

> I didn't expect to be the one to win.

> > - Ichiro Suzuki American League MVP

er anymore," Suzuki said. "I just need to play to make fans happy ... make my team, maybe opposing teams, enjoy my play.

He knows he is raising his profile in the United States, but it is still nowhere near its level in Japan.

"Since the season, I went into a hamburger shop and nobody bothered me," he said with a smile at a news conference in Seattle.

Suzuki said it is his variety of skills that make him an MVP-caliber player.

"I think balance is very important to me," he said. "If even one element is missing, I can't be a good player."

Giambi batted .342 with 38 homers and 120 RBIs for the Oakland Athletics, then became a free agent after the World Series. He is expected to be one of the most soughtafter free agents, and the New York Yankees intend to aggressively court him.

Seattle second baseman Bret Boone, who hit .331 with 37 homers and 141 RBIs, was third in the balloting with seven first-place votes and 259 points, followed by Cleveland second baseman Roberto Alomar (165), Gonzalez (156) and Rodriguez (141).

"I thought both Boone and Ichiro were very deserving," Mariners manager Lou Piniella said. "I'm pleased to see Ichiro won. He had an outstanding season. He led the league in hitting, stolen bases and was outstanding in right field. But I'm disappointed for Boonie. He had and MVP-type season also.'

Boone also is a free agent, and it is unclear if he will stay with the Mariners.

"For the 2002 season, I hope we could eat rice balls together again," Suzuki said.

He is not bothered by rumors that Seattle may trade for or sign another leadoff hitter and drop him down in the batting order. It would not change Suzuki's style.

"If I start to hit with only power, I would get lost with who I am," he said.

Seattle paid the Orix Blue Wave \$13,125,000 after the 2000 season for the rights to Suzuki, then gave him a three-year contract that guaranteed him \$14,088,000. It turned out to be a bargain.

Suzuki, who got a \$75,000 bonus for winning the rookie award, gets a \$150,000 bonus for the MVP. Giambi gets \$75,000 for finishing second, Alomar \$100,000 for fourth, Gonzalez \$100,000 for fifth and Rodriguez \$50,000 for sixth.

By finishing seventh, Cleveland's Jim Thome increased his 2002 base salary from \$7.8 million to \$8 million.

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Three Cleveland players arrested

CLEVELAND (AP) Browns fullback Mike Sellers was charged Tuesday with felony cocaine possession, and two of his Cleveland teammates were also charged with felonies following their arrests in separate cases in two cities.

Sellers and cornerback Lamar Chapman, who was charged with felony drug abuse for marijuana, were arrested Monday night following a traffic stop in Cleveland.

Pittsburgh, top draft pick Gerard Warren was also arrested on a charge of carrying an unlicensed firearm — a felony in Pennsylvania.

According to a filing in Cleveland courts, the charge against Sellers is "based upon presumption." A court clerk said that lab results were still pending.

A dollar bill containing a white powder suspected of being cocaine was found in a patrol car after Sellers and Chapman were taken to the police station, the police report said.

Warren, a rookie defensive tackle who earlier this season was fined \$35,000 by the NFL for a vicious hit on Jacksonville quarterback Mark Brunell, was arraigned Tuesday and released after posting bond.

Warren is due in court on Nov. 30.

Police were questioning a passenger, identified as Percy Blue, for suspected drug use in Warren's Chevy Suburban parked outside a Pittsburgh nightclub at 2:35 a.m. when they spotted an empty gun holster. According to the police

report, Blue told officers he had a .45 Glock handgun locked inside a console in the vehicle. After towing and searching the vehicle, police found the gun, which belonged to Warren.

Warren said his brother, Corey, a Florida policeman, had bought the gun for him and he produced documents showing ownership. However, Warren said he had not yet obtained a license to carry it.

Browns tight end O.J. Santiago told police he was a passenger in Warren's SUV before entering the club. There were also three unidentified female passengers in the vehicle.

The Browns, who earlier in the day released a statement on the arrests of Sellers and Chapman, did not make specific comments on Warren's arrest.

Sellers and Chapman are also facing a list of misdemeanor charges, including using a vehicle to solicit drugs, drug abuse of marijuana and numerous traffic violations.

They are scheduled to appear in court Wednesday morning.

Sellers was speeding and Just a few hours later in swerving in his pickup truck when police pulled him over Monday night. Officers found two bags of marijuana in the glove box and a "folded" dollar bill containing a white powder was found on the backseat of a patrol car after the players were taken to the police station, the police report said.

Browns president Carmen Policy said the club was investigating the arrests.

"We are in communication with the National Football League and fully support all league guidelines and policies," Policy said.

NFL spokesman Greg Aiello had no comment.

Sellers' truck and another vehicle were pulled over at 10:35 p.m. Monday on the city's west side, according to police reports.

Officers said they smelled marijuana and noticed "several clumps" of the substance on the driver-side floor. Chapman, who was in the passenger's seat, was seen putting what later was determined to be a marijuana cigarette into a soda can, police said.

Police said in addition to the marijuana in Sellers' glove compartment, "three burnt marijuana

blunt cigars" were in the ashtray. Sellers refused to submit to a urine test at the jail, police said.

Sellers' agent, Kenneth Austin, said he spoke with his client on Tuesday morning and that Sellers was apologetic and remorseful.

Also, Austin has problems with the police report. "It just doesn't add up," Austin

said. "There is a lot of speculation, especially with the cocaine. The handcuffs were so tight, Mike has bruises on his wrists. His hands were behind his back. How could he reach his front pocket and pull out a dollar bill?"