

# Vuarnet, gold medalist at Squaw Olympics, dies

By Associated Press

Olympic skiing champion Jean Vuarnet, who helped pioneer the aerodynamic tuck position for downhill racers but suffered tragedy with the deaths of his wife and son in a doomsday cult murder-suicide, has died, the French Olympic Committee announced Monday. He was 83.

Vuarnet died of a stroke, a statement by the committee said.

The Frenchman won Olympic gold in the downhill at the 1960 winter games in Squaw Valley. Rejecting wooden skis, he was the first skier to win an Olympic gold on metal skis.

He was also the only competitor in that race to use the speedier low tuck position, squatting down with knees bent.

Vuarnet later lent his name to a successful brand of eyewear and was involved in the development of the Avoriaz ski resort in the French Alps.

Born in the Tunisian capital of Tunis on Jan. 18, 1933, Vuarnet grew up in the Alpine Morzine region of France

In 1995, Vuarnet's wife, Edith, and their youngest son, Patrick, were among 16 people who died in a murder-suicide involving the Order of the Solar Temple doomsday group.

French police discovered the charred remains of 14 victims – arranged in a star formation – in a forest clearing near the Alpine city of Grenoble. Two other bodies were found nearby.

Investigators said police officer Jean-Pierre Lardanchet and Swiss architect Andre Friedli fatally shot the others, doused the bodies with gasoline and set the