

Then and now: Tahoe's Olympic track



The track at Echo Summit in 1968. Photo/Les Wright



The track at STMS today. Photo/Google Earth

The 1968 Summer Olympics (the XIX Olympiad) were in October in Mexico City, 7,350 feet above sea level.

To prepare our athletes for that high altitude, a training track was built at Echo Summit because that elevation is similar to Mexico City.

According to Wikipedia, "... this was the first Olympics to use

a synthetic all-weather surface for track and field events; the 'Tartan' surface was originally developed by 3M for horse racing, but didn't catch on. The tracks at previous Olympics were conventional cinder."

The Tartan track was moved from Echo Summit to South Tahoe Middle School a year later. The original surface eventually wore out and has been replaced.

– *Bill Kingman*