



Asterix

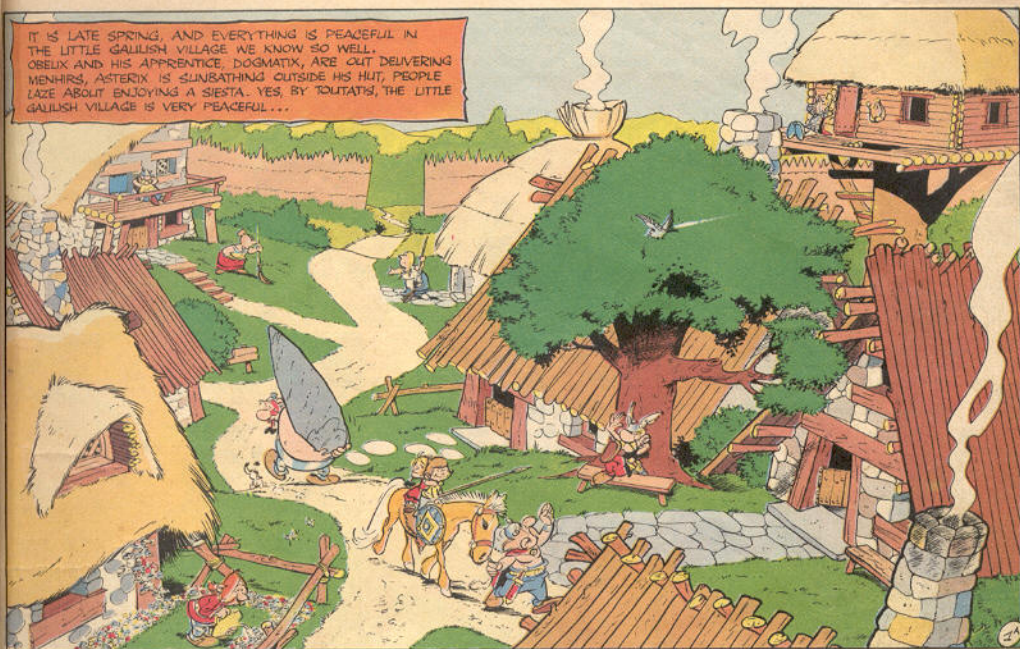
TEXT: GOSCINNY
DRAWINGS: UDERZO

AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES



HODDER-DARGAUD

IT IS LATE SPRING, AND EVERYTHING IS PEACEFUL IN THE LITTLE GAULISH VILLAGE WE KNOW SO WELL. OREUX AND HIS APPRENTICE, DOGMATIX, ARE OUT DELIVERING MENHIRS, ASTERIX IS SUNBATHING OUTSIDE HIS HUT, PEOPLE LAZE ABOUT ENJOYING A SIESTA. YES, BY TOUTATIS, THE LITTLE GAULISH VILLAGE IS VERY PEACEFUL...



WHEREAS THE ROMAN CAMP OF AQUARIUM SEEMS TO BE IN A STATE OF GREAT EXCITEMENT...

BY JUPITER!

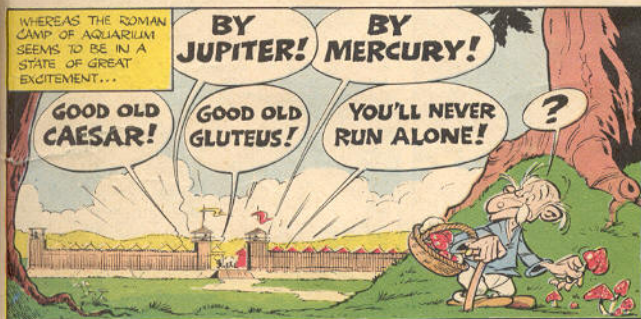
BY MERCURY!

GOOD OLD CAESAR!

GOOD OLD GLUTEUS!

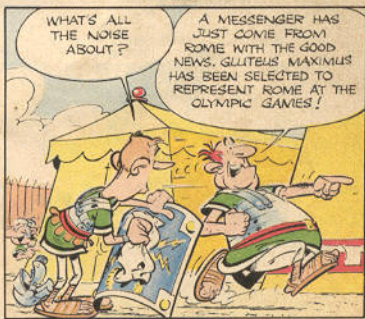
YOU'LL NEVER RUN ALONE!

?



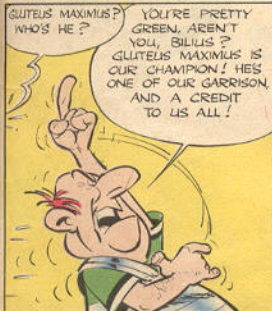
WHAT'S ALL THE NOISE ABOUT?

A MESSENGER HAS JUST COME FROM ROME WITH THE GOOD NEWS. GLUTEUS MAXIMUS HAS BEEN SELECTED TO REPRESENT ROME AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES!



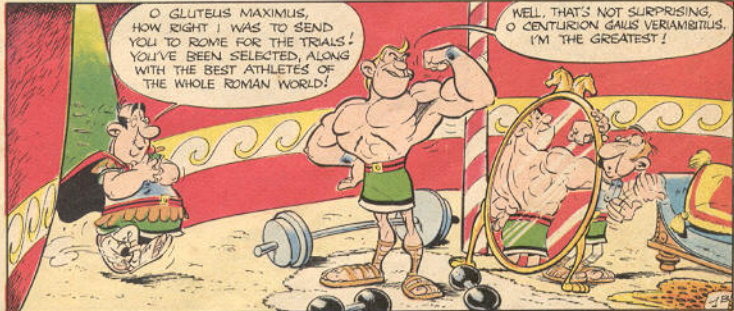
GLUTEUS MAXIMUS? WHO'S HE?

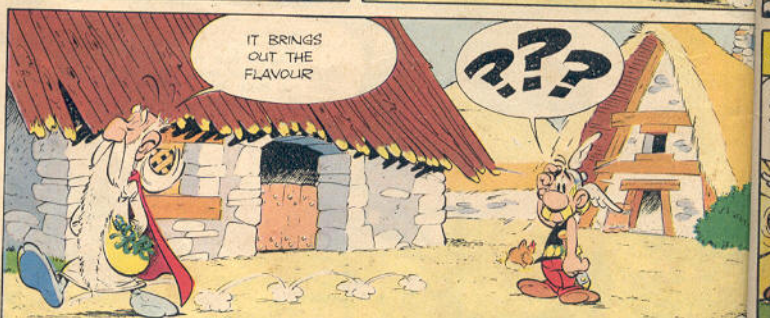
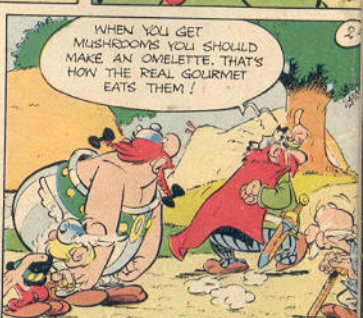
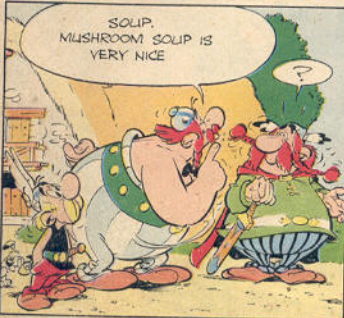
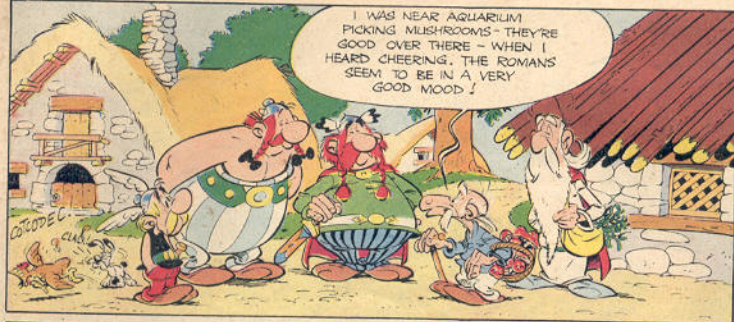
YOU'RE PRETTY GREEN, AREN'T YOU, SILIUS? GLUTEUS MAXIMUS IS OUR CHAMPION! HE'S ONE OF OUR GARRISON AND A CREDIT TO US ALL!



O GLUTEUS MAXIMUS, HOW RIGHT I WAS TO SEND YOU TO ROME FOR THE TRIALS! YOU'VE BEEN SELECTED, ALONG WITH THE BEST ATHLETES OF THE WHOLE ROMAN WORLD!

WELL, THAT'S NOT SURPRISING. O COUTURUS GAULS VERIAMBITUS. I'M THE GREATEST!

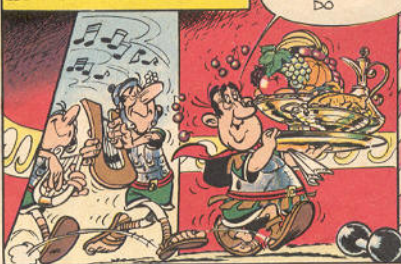




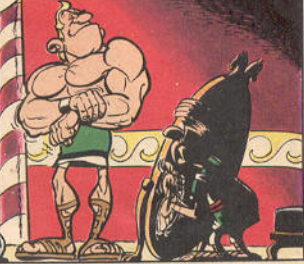
AT AQUARIUM, WHILE THE DUTY BUCCINIST IS BLOWING (COME TO THE COOK-HOUSE DOOR, BOYS'...



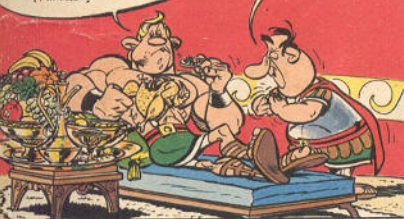
A MORE SOPHISTICATED BLOW-OUT HAS BEEN PROVIDED FOR LEGIONARY GLUTTEUS MAXIMUS



HERE'S YOUR SUPPER. I HOPE IT WILL DO



NOT BAD, O CENTURION GAULS VERIAMBITUS. ARMY RATIONS ARE IMPROVING! WHAT ARE THESE LITTLE BLACK THINGS?

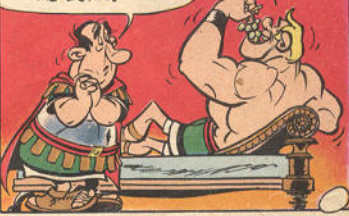


THEY'RE STURGEON'S EGGS, SENT FROM PERSIA TO OUR COMMANDING OFFICER—CAVARE TO THE GENERAL, SO TO SPEAK!

IF YOU WIN THE GOLD PALM AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES THERE'LL BE EXTRA PASSES FOR THE CIRCUS AND PROMOTION ALL ROUND

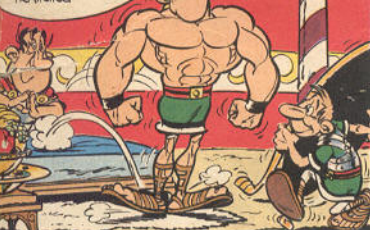


SPORTING PRESTIGE IS A MATTER OF SUCH NATIONAL IMPORTANCE THAT IF YOU WIN I COULD EVEN BECOME PREFECT OF GAUL! DON'T LET ME DOWN!



STOP WORRYING—I WON'T FAIL YOU, VERIAMBITUS

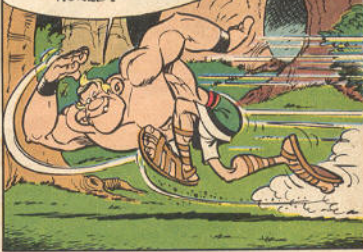
IT'LL BE A PUSHOVER. I'M THE GREATEST! NOW I'M OFF TO THE FOREST TO DO SOME TRAINING



HIS MORALE IS MARVELLOUS. WITH CONFIDENCE LIKE THAT, HE CAN'T LOSE!

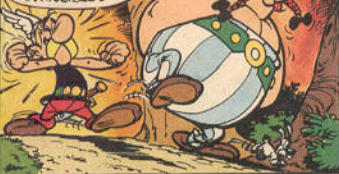


FIRST A BIT OF SPRINTING—I'M THE FASTEST MAN IN THE WORLD!



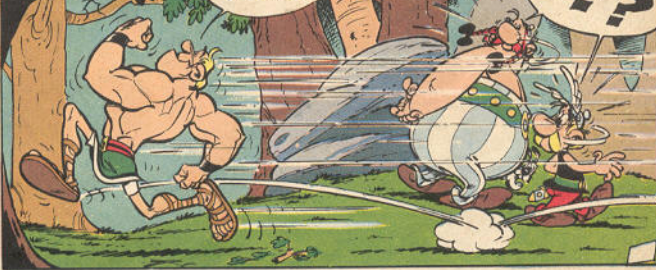
MEANWHILE, IN ANOTHER PART OF THE FOREST...

I FEEL ON TOP FORM FOR A SPOT OF BOAR-HUNTING. GETARY GAVE ME SOME OF THE MAGIC POTION WHICH MAKES US INVINCIBLE!

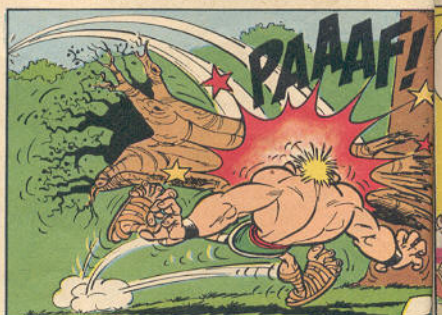
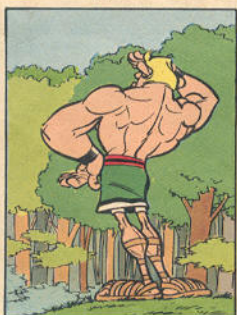
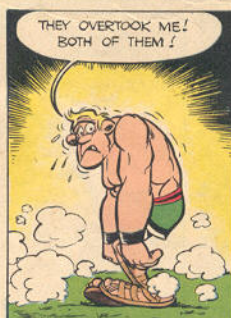
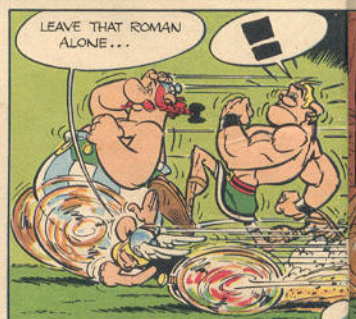
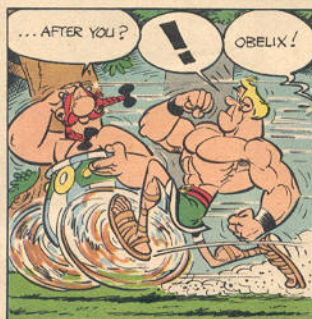
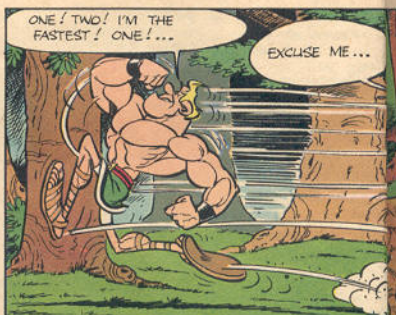
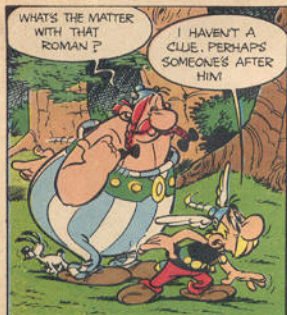


I KNOW, I KNOW, AND I DIDN'T GET ANY SEEING AS I...

ONE! TWO! ONE! TWO!



???



LIBRARY

DON'T TAKE ANY NOTICE
OF MY FRIEND, ROMAN ...

OBLIX ! WHY DID
YOU DO THAT ?
HE WASN'T BOTHERING
US

WHAT D'YOU MEAN ?
HE THREW THAT BIT OF
WOOD AT MY HEAD, SO I
THREW ONE BACK AT HIM.
WE'RE QUITS NOW

YOU'RE NOT GOING
TO GET AWAY WITH
THIS, **BY
JUPITER!**

YOU, FATTY ! I'LL TAKE YOU ON AT ORDINARY
WRESTLING, ALL-IN WRESTLING, BOXING ! I'LL
WALLOP YOU AT THOSE ! I'M THE GREATEST !
I'M ...

I'M NOT FAT !

PAFFF!

TELL ME STRAIGHT,
ASTERIX, ONCE AND
FOR ALL : DO YOU
THINK I'M FAT ?

OF COURSE NOT,
OBLIX. YOUR
CHEST HAS SUPPED
A BIT, THAT'S ALL.
COME ON, ARE WE GOING
TO GET THOSE BOARDS ?

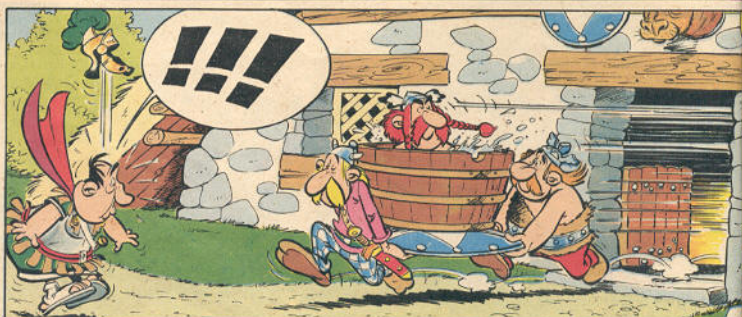
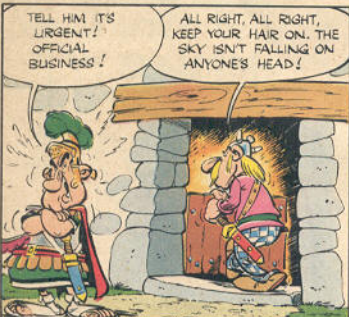
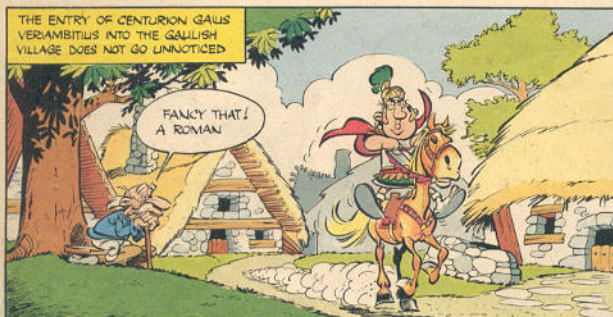
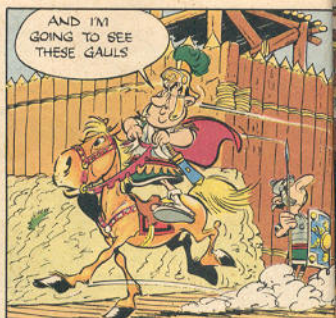
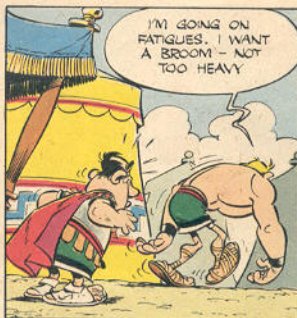
I'M
HOPELESS !

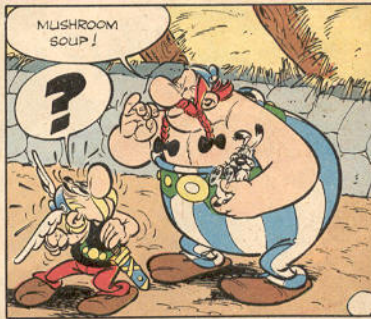
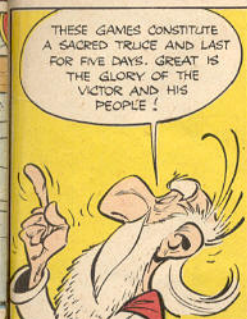
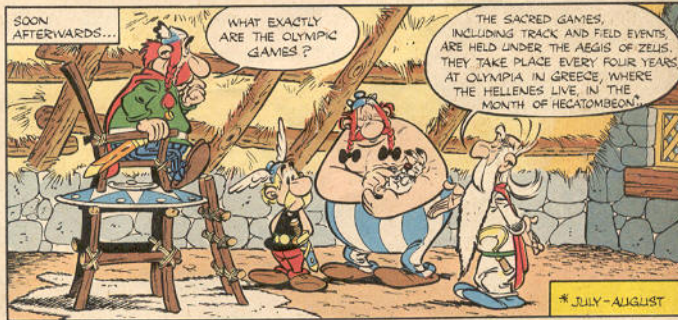
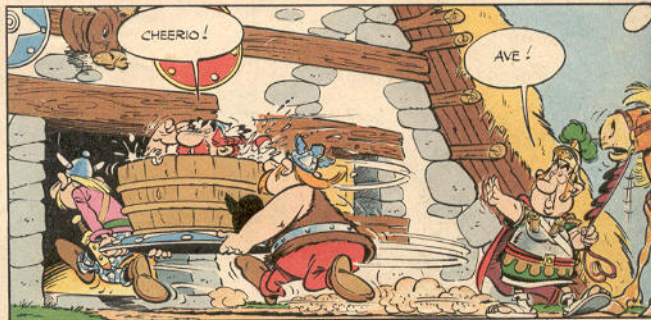
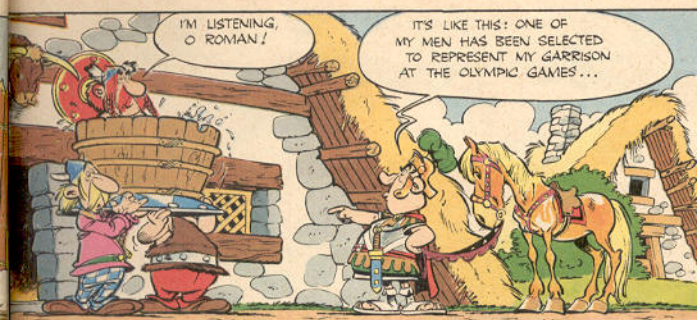
**WHAT D'YOU MEAN,
HOPELESS ???**

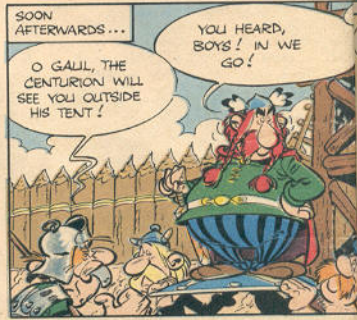
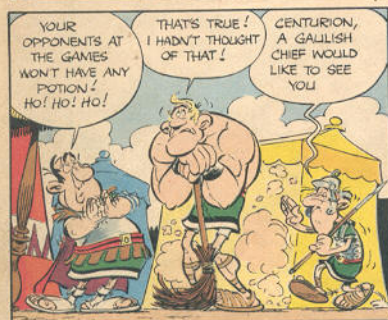
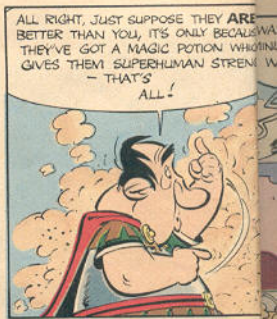
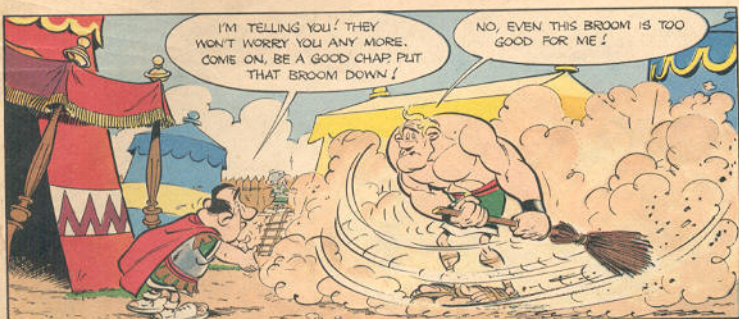
**WHO SAID
YOU WERE
HOPELESS ?**

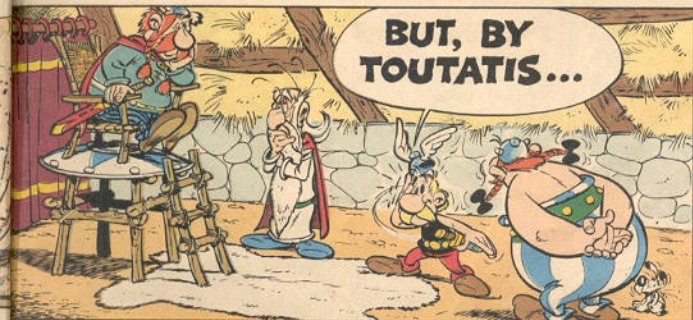
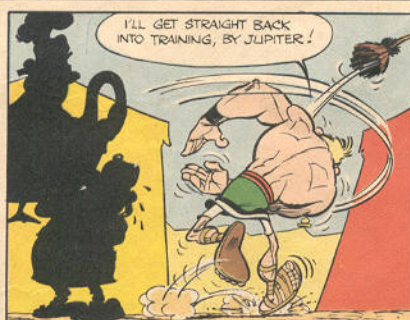
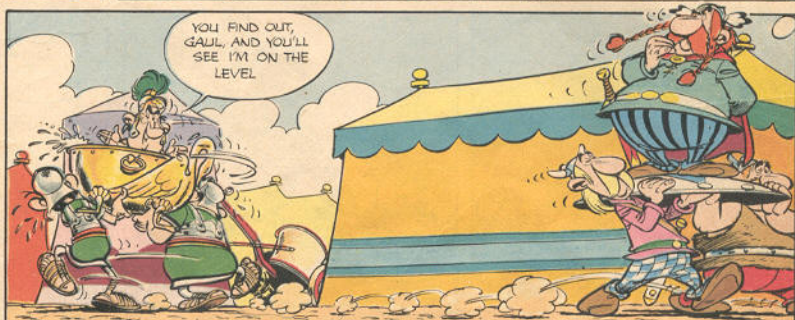
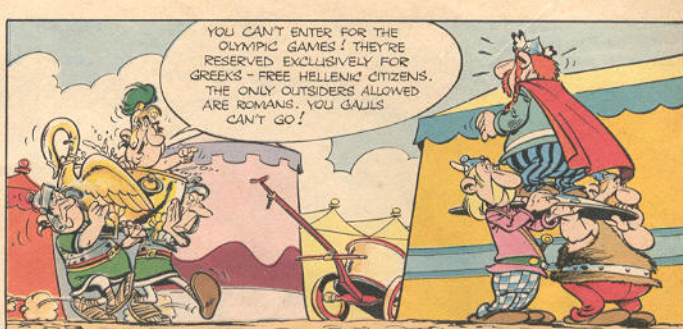
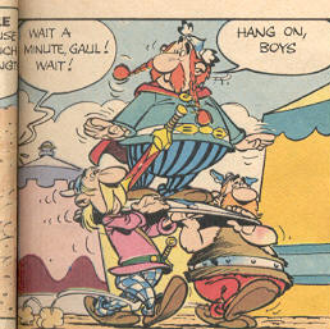
I SAID I WAS HOPELESS. EVERYONE IS BETTER
THAN ME. I'VE BEEN BEATEN BY ALL THE GAULS
I MET. A LITTLE TITCH AND A FAT
ONE WITH A PALINCH.
EVERYONE

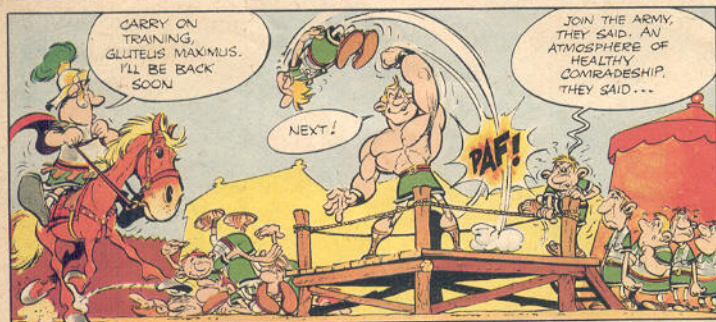
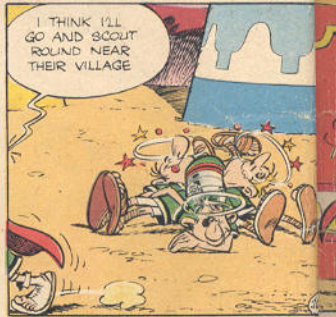
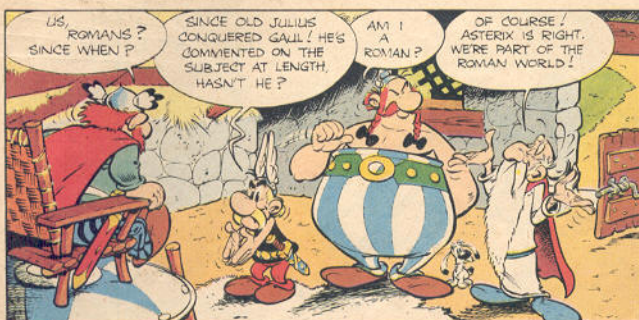
THE GAULS, BY
JUPITER ! IT'S BEEN A
LONG TIME SINCE WE HAD
ANY TROUBLE WITH
THEM !

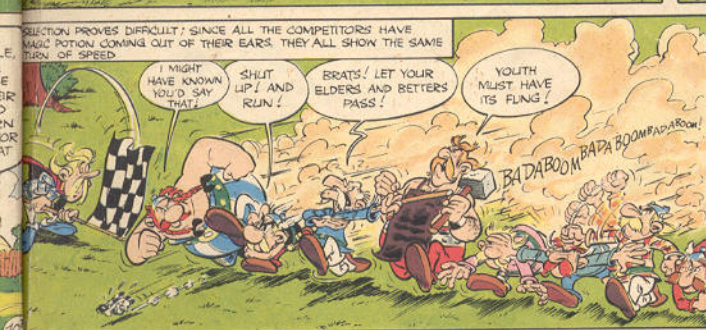
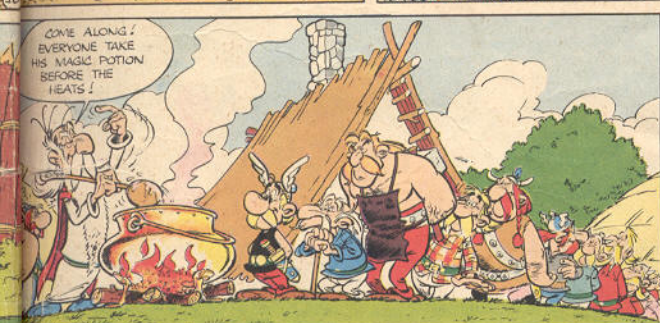
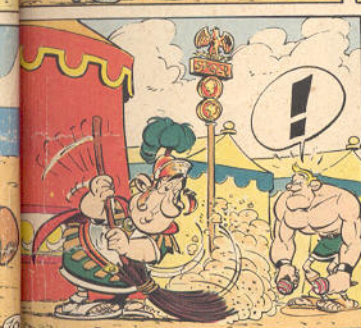
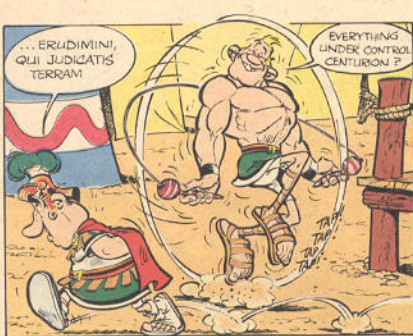












THE OLDEST INHABITANT SHOULD REPRESENT THE VILLAGE!

NO! I SHALL GO TO THE OLYMPIC GAMES!

HUH! MIGHT JUST AS WELL SEND DOGMATIX. HE'S BETTER THAN YOU

BETTER THAN ME?

WELL, CAN YOU SCRATCH YOUR EAR WITH YOUR HIND LEG?



ORDER! ORDER!
THE OLYMPIC COMMITTEE HAS CHOSEN OUR TEAM

ASTERIX, BECAUSE HE'S THE MOST INTELLIGENT AND BECAUSE WITHOUT HIM WE WOULDN'T BE COMPETING IN THE GAMES AT ALL, AND OBELIX BECAUSE THE POTION HAD A PERMANENT EFFECT ON HIM

EXACTLY! I FELL IN WHEN I WAS A BABY!

GET AWAY! DO TELL ME ALL ABOUT IT...

AND NOW I'VE GOT A SURPRISE FOR YOU! WE SHALL ALL ACCOMPANY OUR TEAM TO OLYMPIA TO CHEER THEM ON!

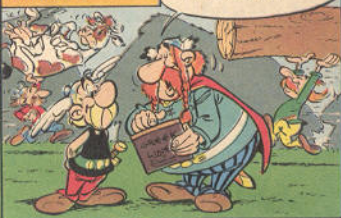
**GOOD OLD VITALSTATISTIX!
GOOD OLD ASTERIX!
GOOD OLD OBELIX!**

OBJECTION!
I DON'T AGREE!
LOOK!

AS THE DAY OF DEPARTURE APPROACHES, MORALE IN THE ROMAN CAMP IS GOING DOWN AND DOWN...



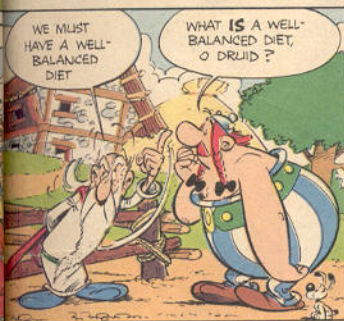
... WHEREAS IN THE GAULISH VILLAGE EVERYONE IS IN THE BEST OF SPIRITS. CHIEF VITALSTAR ISTIX IS PLANNING THE JOURNEY...



I'VE HIRED A BOAT. WE'RE GOING TO BE VERY COMFORTABLE: ONE CLASS ONLY, DECK GAMES, OPEN AIR SPORTS AND MARVELLOUS ATMOSPHERE!

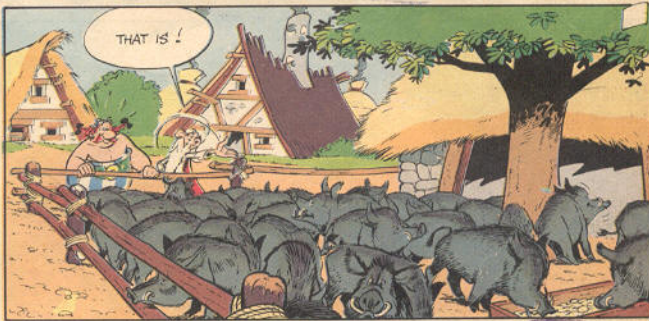
THE DRUID GETAFIX HAS TAKEN CHARGE OF ALL THE ATHLETES' TECHNICAL PROBLEMS

WE MUST PLAN THEIR TRAINING CAREFULLY. FOREIGN FOOD COULD RUIN OUR CHAMPIONS' FITNESS



WE MUST HAVE A WELL-BALANCED DIET

WHAT IS A WELL-BALANCED DIET, O DRUID?



THAT IS!

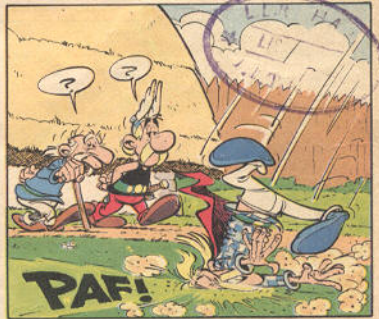
THE BARD CACOFONIX IS PREPARING FOR THE POMP OF THE CEREMONIES



I WILL NOW COMPOSE AN OLYMPIC HYMN



NO, YOU ARE NOT GOING TO SING!



PAF!

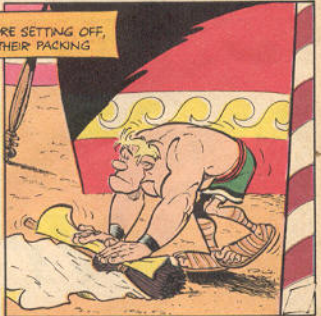


WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HIS HYMN?

I THINK HE'S SINGING FLAT



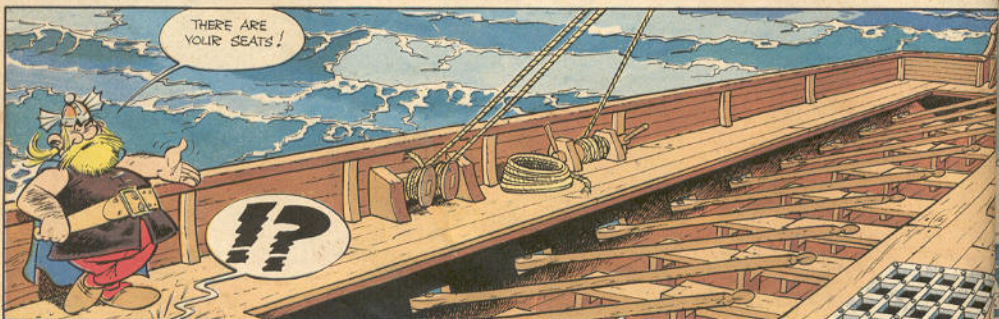
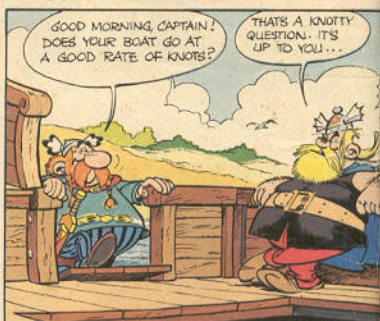
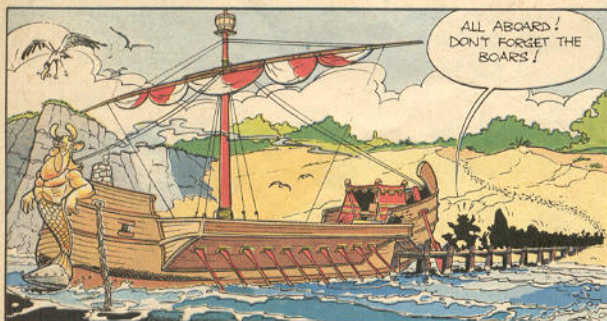
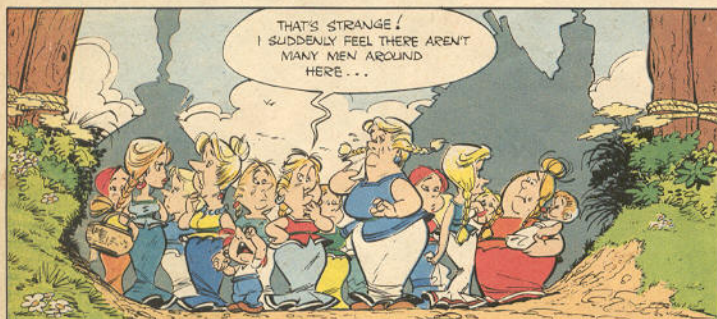
AND THE DAY BEFORE SETTING OFF, THE ATHLETES DO THEIR PACKING

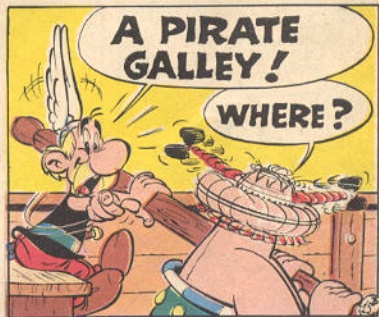
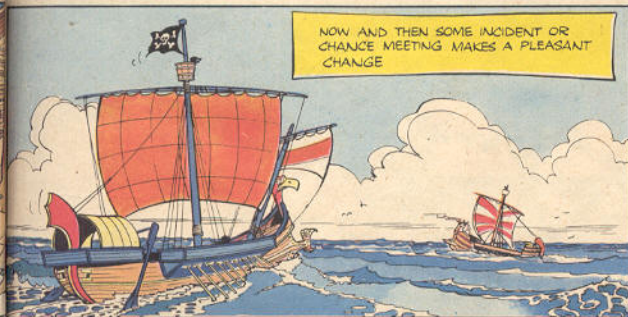
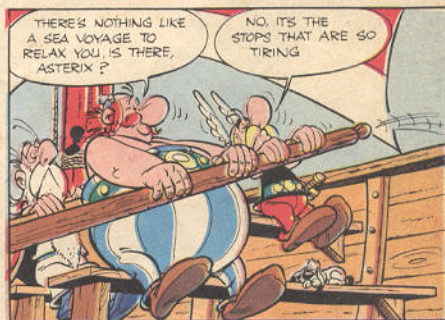
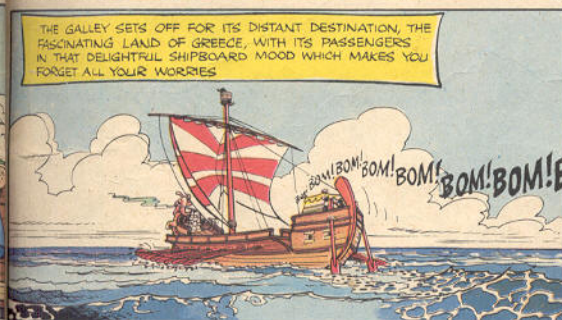
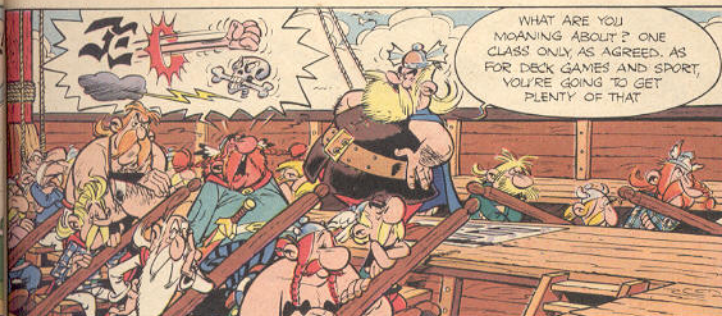


AT LAST THE DAY
OF DEPARTURE DAWNS.
OUR FRIENDS SET OFF
FOR OLYMPIA AND
OLYMPIC GLORY!

UP GAUL!
WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS!

WOOF! WOOF!
WOOF!





GALLEY RIGHT AHEAD!



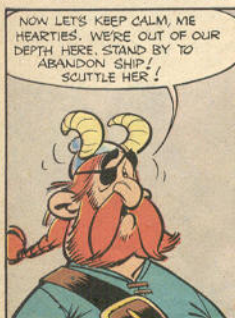
THERE AREN'T ONE OR TWO GALLS ABOARD THAT GALLEY, BY ANY CHANCE?



IT'S SWARMING WITH FEROCIOUS GAULISH WARRIORS!



NOW LET'S KEEP CALM, MIE HEARTIES. WE'RE OUT OF OUR DEPTH HERE. SHIP BY TO ABANDON SHIP! SCUTTLE HER!

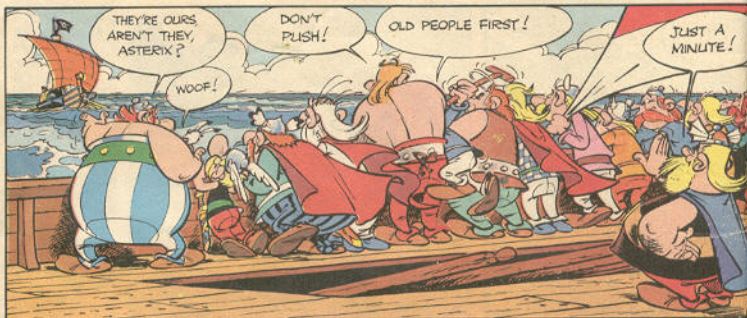


THEY'RE OURS, AREN'T THEY, ASTERIX?

DON'T PUSH!

OLD PEOPLE FIRST!

JUST A MINUTE!



BOARDING PIRATE VESSELS IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE FARE. IT'S AN EXTRA



WHAT D'YOU MEAN, AN EXTRA?

I'D JUST LIKE TO POINT OUT THAT BOARDING IS AN OPTIONAL EXTRA...



APPLY TO THE PURSER. IT'S TWO SESTERTII!



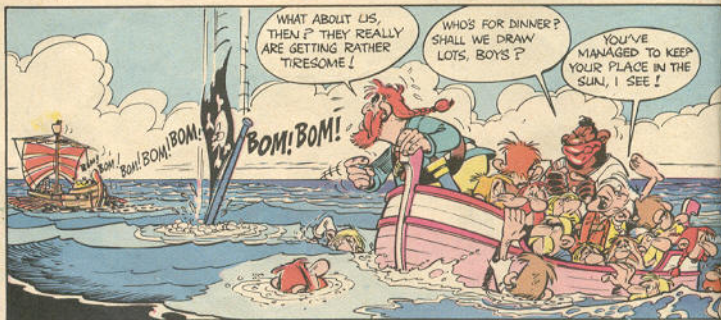
WE'LL COMPLAIN TO THE COMPANY! IT'S AN ABSOLUTE DISGRACE! YOU CAN KEEP YOUR BLESSED PIRATE!

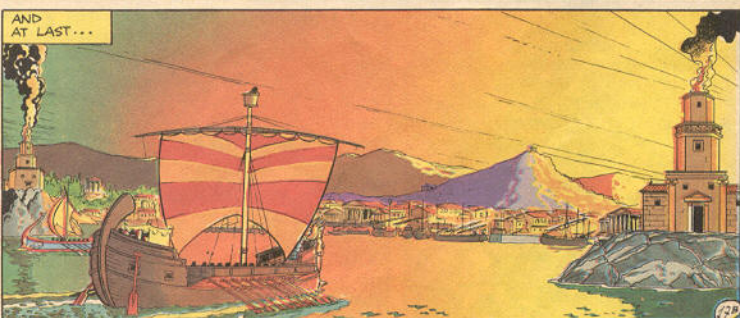
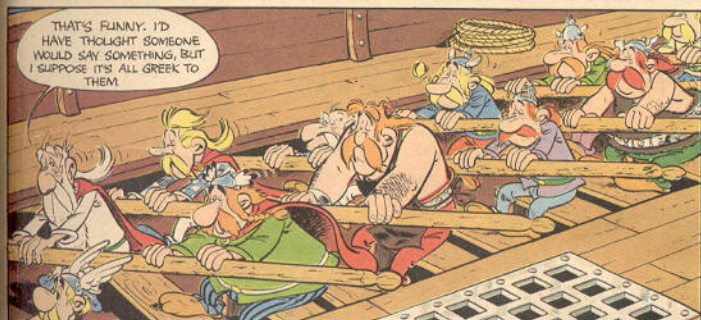
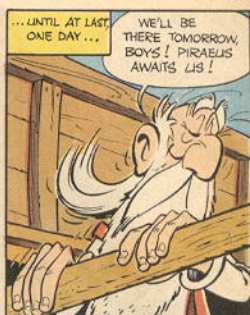


WHAT ABOUT US, THEN? THEY REALLY ARE GETTING RATHER TIRESOME!

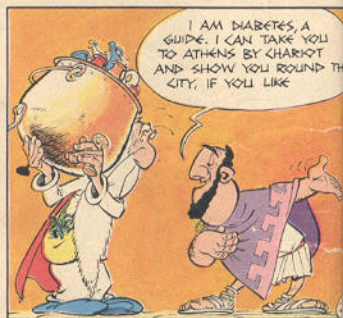
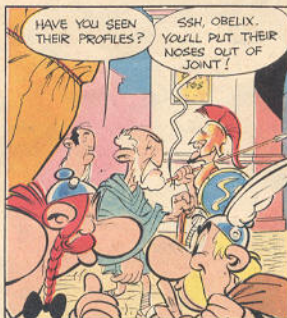
WHO'S FOR DINNER? SHALL WE DRAW LOTS, BOYS?

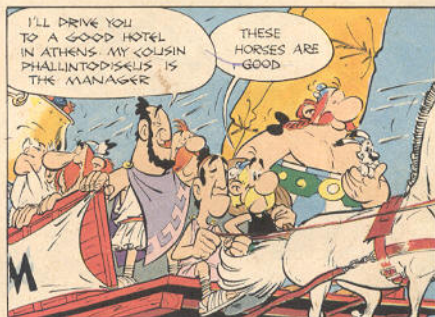
YOU'VE MANAGED TO KEEP YOUR PLACE IN THE SUN, I SEE!





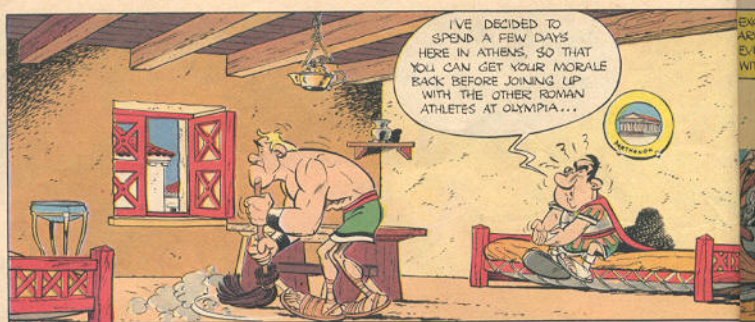
RIGHT, BOYS! WE REPRESENT GALL! LET US BE WORTHY OF HER! WE WON'T DRAW ATTENTION TO OURSELVES, OR MAKE FUN OF THE NATIVES, EVEN IF THEY DON'T HAVE ALL THE ADVANTAGES OF OUR GLORIOUS CULTURAL HERITAGE!





IN A CHEAP ROOM AT A SMALL
ATHENS HOTEL...

FOR JUPITER'S
SAKE! STOP CARRYING
ON LIKE THAT!



I'VE DECIDED TO
SPEND A FEW DAYS
HERE IN ATHENS, SO THAT
YOU CAN GET YOUR MORALE
BACK BEFORE JOINING UP
WITH THE OTHER ROMAN
ATHLETES AT OLYMPIA...

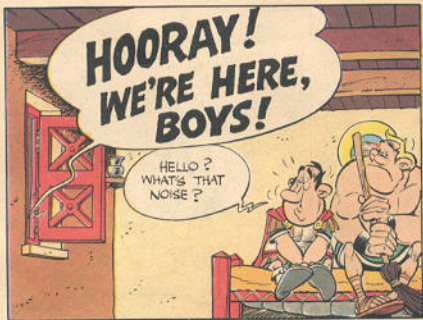
YOU'RE RIGHT!
I MUST TRY AND
CALM DOWN

THAT'S IT!
FORGET ABOUT
THOSE GAULS!

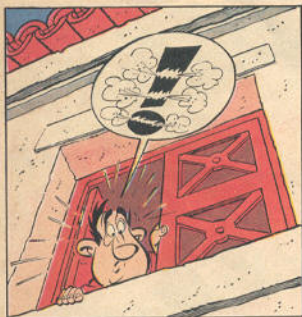


**HOORAY!
WE'RE HERE,
BOYS!**

HELLO?
WHAT'S THAT
NOISE?

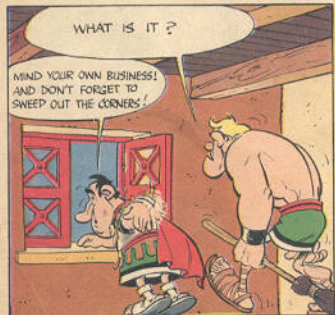


LET'S
SEE!



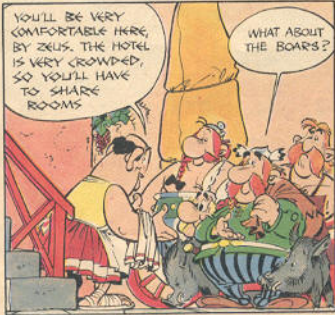
WHAT IS IT?

MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS!
AND DON'T FORGET TO
SWEEP OUT THE CORNERS!



YOU'LL BE VERY
COMFORTABLE HERE,
BY ZEUS. THE HOTEL
IS VERY CROWDED,
SO YOU'LL HAVE
TO SHARE
ROOMS

WHAT ABOUT
THE BOARDS?



YOU CAN KEEP
PETS IN YOUR ROOMS.
WE HAVE TO PIG IT
A BIT WHEN THE PLACE
IS SO FULL



EXCEPT FOR THE BOARS, WHO ARE VERY FUSSY ANIMALS, EVERYONE IS VERY PLEASED WITH THE ACCOMMODATION.

I'M WARNING YOU, I SLEEP WITH THE WINDOW CLOSED!

DINK!



COME ALONG, BOYS! DIABTES IS GOING TO SHOW US THE ACROPOLIS!

AND SOON AFTERWARDS ALL OUR TRAVELLERS CAN BE SEEN ON THE SACRED ROCK OF THE ACROPOLIS, WHERE THEY ADVANCE THE PROPYLAEA, THE TEMPLE OF AKE, AND THAT MASTERPIECE OF CLASSICAL ARCHITECTURE, THE PARTHENON...

IT REMINDS ME OF BURDIGALA...

NO THERE'S A LITTLE SQUARE IN MASSILIA...

WHAT, NO DOLMENS?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

NOT BAD, IF YOU LIKE COLUMNS

DINK!

LOOK AT THAT! LOOK AT THAT, MY FRIENDS!

SMASHING!

HOLD IT THERE!

WELL, WHAT D'YOU THINK OF IT?

MAGNIFICENT!

YES, IT'S QUITE GOOD, FOR FOREIGNERS

SPEAKING OF FOREIGNERS, HERE COME OUR FELLOW COUNTRYMEN!

!



I AM NOT YOUR FELLOW COUNTRYMAN! IF I HAD MY WAY I'D GIVE YOU BACK GAUL AND REPATRIATE EVERYBODY!



BY TOUTAIS! IT OFFENDS MY ROMAN SPIRIT TO HEAR YOU TALK LIKE THAT!

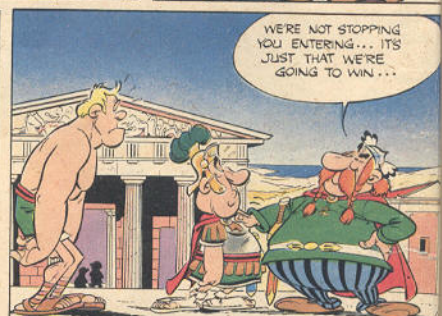


SERIOUSLY, NOW, YOU'RE NEVER GOING TO TAKE PART IN THE GAMES?

WITH THE MAGIC POTION THAT MAKES US INVINCIBLE, YOU MUST ADMIT WE'D BE STUPID NOT TO!



BUT IT'S NOT FAIR! WHAT'S GOING TO BECOME OF US?



WE'RE NOT STOPPING YOU ENTERING... IT'S JUST THAT WE'RE GOING TO WIN...



... THAT'S THE POINT!



I'M TAKING YOU TO HAVE LUNCH AT MY COUSIN'S RESTAURANT. HIS NAME'S THERVIO'S

THERE'S NO DEPOSIT ON THE AMPHORA. WHAT DO I DO WITH IT?

KEEP IT, IT'LL MAKE A NICE SOUVENIR

ONK!

SO OUR TOURIST FRIENDS ARE INTRODUCED TO THE JOYS OF STUFFED VINE LEAVES, KEBABS, OLIVES, WATER MELON AND RESINATED WINE.



I HAD ONE WITH ME, BUT I LEFT HIM OUTSIDE. YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO BRING YOUR OWN FOOD

WHAT ON EARTH DO THEY PUT IN THEIR WINE?

OH, FOR A DROP OF AQUITANIAN WINE!

D'YOU REMEMBER THAT LITTLE RESTAURANT NEAR LUGDUNUM? WHERE WE HAD THAT DELICIOUS VEAL?

IT'S NOT A PATCH ON BOAR!

ONK!

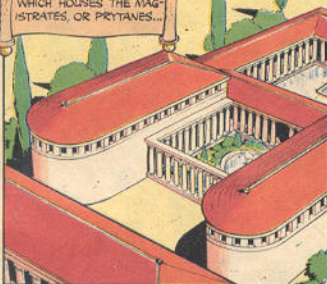
OLYMPIA! OLYMPIA, WITH ITS TEMPLES OF ZEUS, AND PHIDIAS'S STATUE OF THE GOD, ONE OF THE SEVEN WONDERS OF THE WORLD...



IN THE ALTIS, THE SACRED ENCLOSURE, STANDS THE HELLANODIKEION, WHERE THE HELLANODIKAI, THE TEN JUDGES ELECTED BY THE MAGISTRATES OF ELIS, SIT...



... AND THE PRYTANEON, WHICH HOUSES THE MAGISTRATES, OR PRYTANES...



... THE BOULEUTERION, WHERE THE OLYMPIC SENATE SITS...



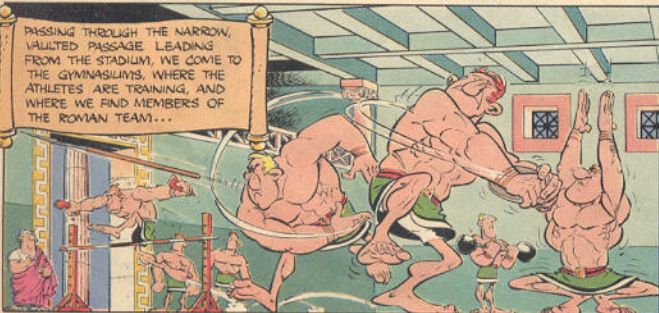
... AND FINALLY THE STADIUM! THE TRACK IS 192.27 METRES LONG, THAT IS TO SAY 600 TIMES THE LENGTH OF THE FOOT OF HERACLES...



... WHICH ALLOWS US TO CALCULATE THAT THE DEMI-GOD TOOK ABOUT SIZE 11 IN SHOES

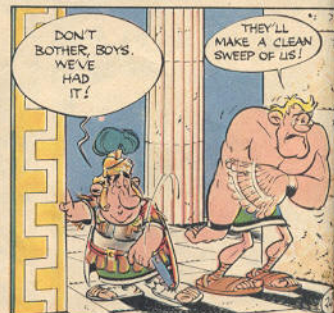


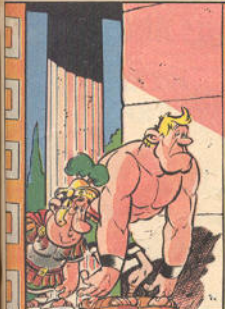
PASSING THROUGH THE NARROW, VAULTED PASSAGE LEADING FROM THE STADIUM, WE COME TO THE GYMNASIUM, WHERE THE ATHLETES ARE TRAINING, AND WHERE WE FIND MEMBERS OF THE ROMAN TEAM...



DON'T BOTHER, BOYS. WE'VE HAD IT!

THEY'LL MAKE A CLEAN SWEEP OF US!





BY JUPITER, CENTURION, HOW DARE YOU TALK LIKE THAT?



WE HAVE HERE THE FLOWER OF THE ROMAN LEGIONS! ATHLETES PICKED FROM ALL THE GARRISONS OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE! NO ONE CAN BEAT US!



NO ONE? GO ON, TELL HIM, GUTTEUS MAXIMUS!



WELL THERE'S THIS LITTLE GALL, AND THIS OTHER FAT ONE WITH A CHEST THAT'S SLIPPED A BIT...

AND THEY'RE STUFFED WITH MAGIC POTION! AR-SO LUTELY INVINCIBLE!



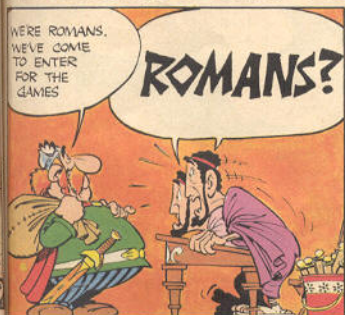
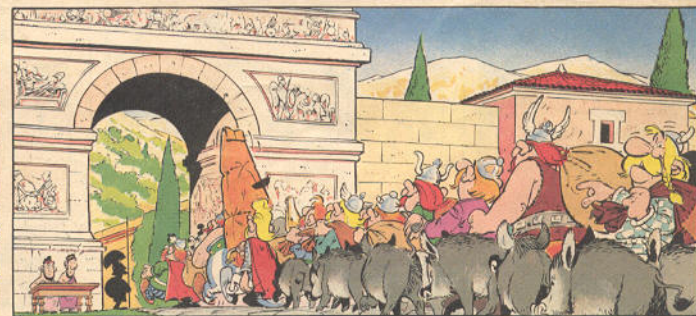
CAESAR WON'T BE PLEASED IF WE DON'T BRING BACK ONE OR TWO PALMS OF VICTORY!

NO, HE WILL NOT BE PLEASED!



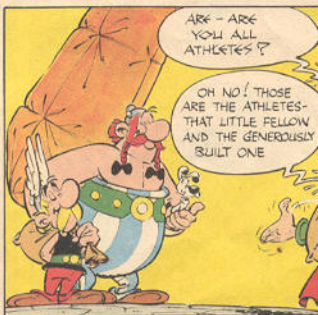
AND AT THAT MOMENT, AT THE REGISTRATION DESK...

FOR HERMES' SAKE WHAT'S THAT?



WERE ROMANS. WE'VE COME TO ENTER FOR THE GAMES

ROMANS?



ARE - ARE YOU ALL ATHLETES?

OH NO! THOSE ARE THE ATHLETES - THAT LITTLE FELLOW AND THE GENEROUSLY BUILT ONE



FOKKINNT TAPPO

ANCIENT ROME IS REALLY GETTING DECADENT!

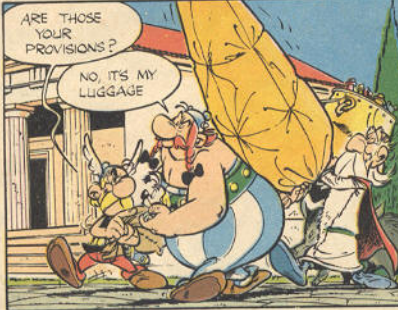
I'LL SAY!

RIGHT... ER... WELL, THE ATHLETES AND THEIR TRAINER CAN BE ADMITTED TO THE OLYMPIC VILLAGE, ALONG WITH THEIR LUGGAGE AND PROVISIONS



ARE THOSE YOUR PROVISIONS?

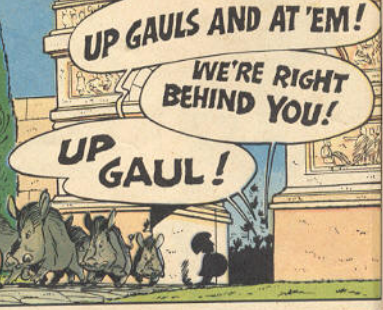
NO, IT'S MY LUGGAGE



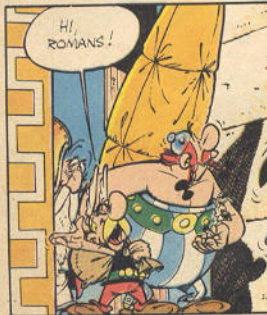
UP GAULS AND AT 'EM!

WE'RE RIGHT BEHIND YOU!

UP GAUL!



HI, ROMANS!

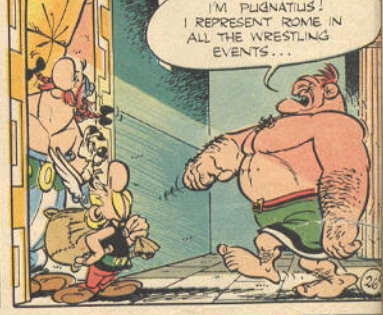


IT'S THEM!
IT'S THEM!

JUST A MOMENT! LET ME BY!



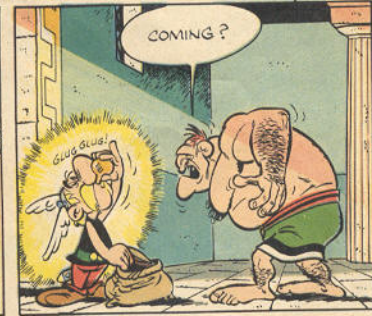
I'M PUGNATIUS!
I REPRESENT ROME IN
ALL THE WRESTLING
EVENTS...



I HEAR YOU'RE VERY STRONG, GAUL. I DON'T BELIEVE IT! COME ON, PROVE IT, BY MINERVA!



COMING?



COMING!



CAN I PROVE IT TOO, ASTERIX?

I DON'T KNOW. ASK HIM!

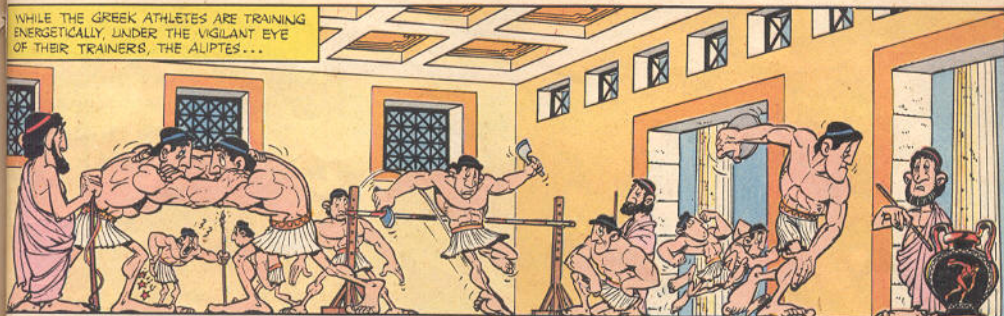


CAESAR... CAESAR REALLY IS NOT GOING TO BE PLEASED, IS HE?

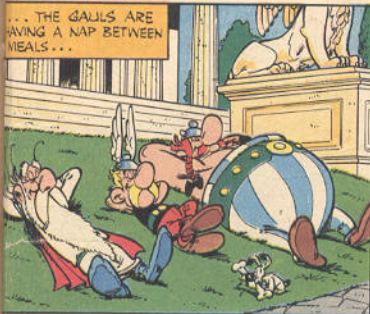
HE WON'T TELL ME, ASTERIX



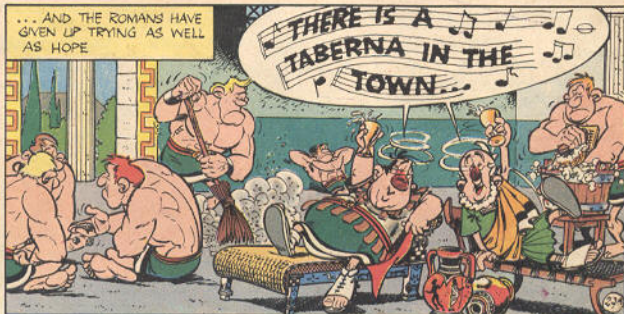
WHILE THE GREEK ATHLETES ARE TRAINING ENERGETICALLY UNDER THE VIGILANT EYE OF THEIR TRAINERS, THE AUPTES...



... THE GAULS ARE HAVING A NAP BETWEEN MEALS...



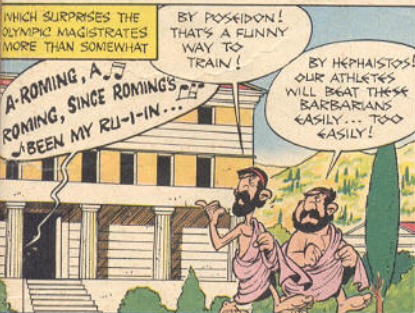
... AND THE ROMANS HAVE GIVEN UP TRYING AS WELL AS HOPE



WHICH SURPRISES THE OLYMPIC MAGISTRATES MORE THAN SOMEWHAT

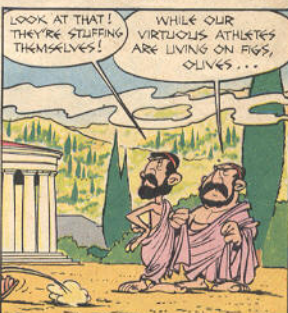
BY POSEIDON! THAT'S A FUNNY WAY TO TRAIN!

A-ROMING, A-ROMING, SINCE ROMINGS BEEN MY RU-I-IN...

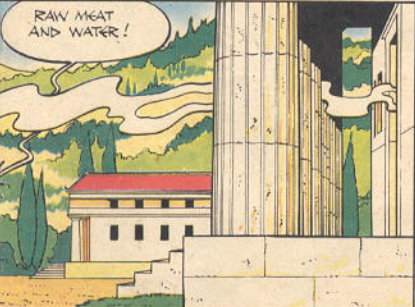


LOOK AT THAT! THEY'RE STUFFING THEMSELVES!

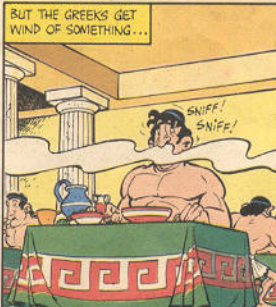
WHILE OUR VIRTUOUS ATHLETES ARE LIVING ON FIGS, OLIVES...



RAW MEAT AND WATER!



BUT THE GREEKS GET WIND OF SOMETHING...



... WHICH LEADS TO REGRETTABLE INCIDENTS IN THE OLYMPIC VILLAGE

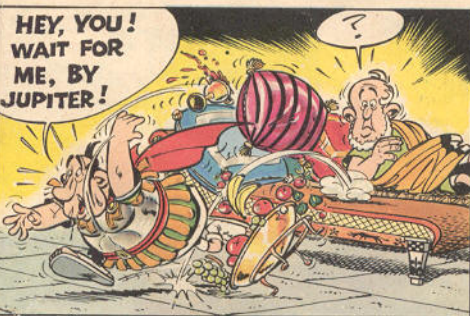
I'M NOT EATING THIS!

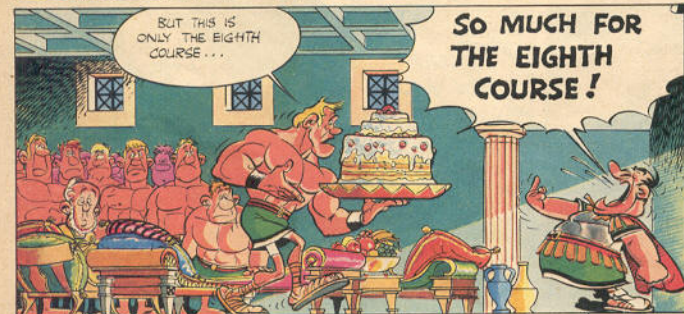
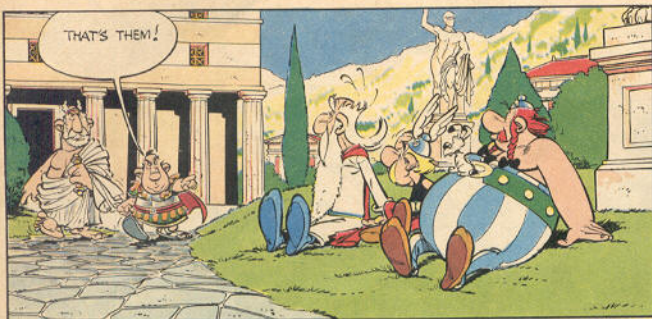


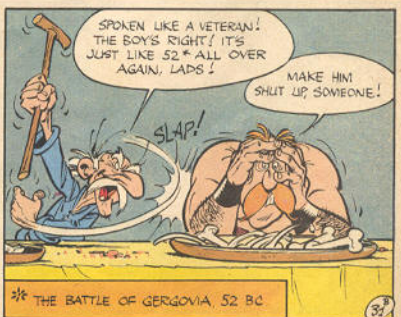


BUT BACK HOME IN SPARTA WE DON'T HAVE SAVAGES NEXT DOOR, STUFFING THEMSELVES WITH DELICIOUS THINGS ALL DAY LONG!

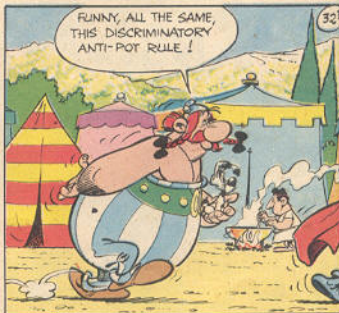
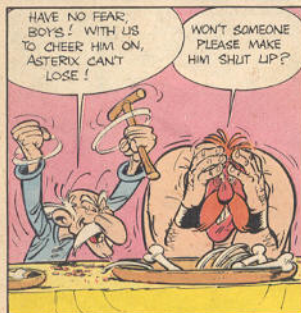
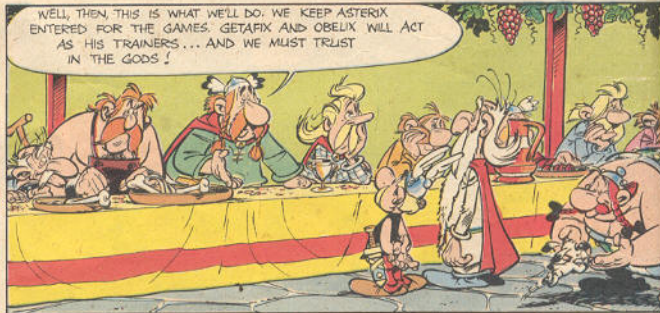
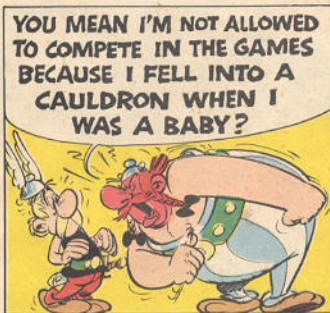
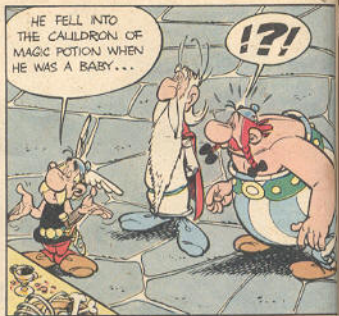
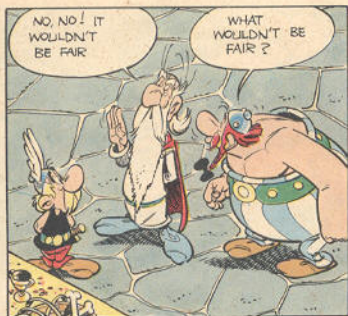


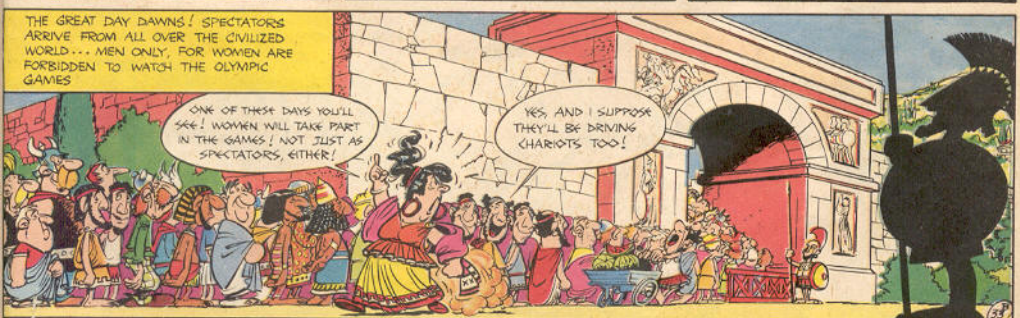
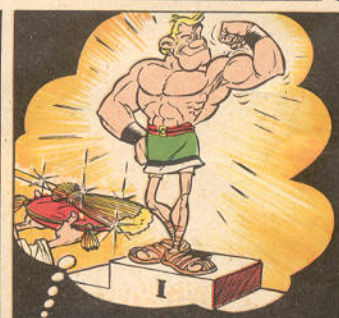
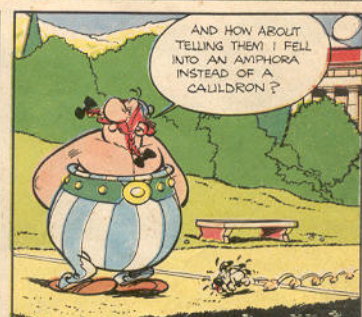
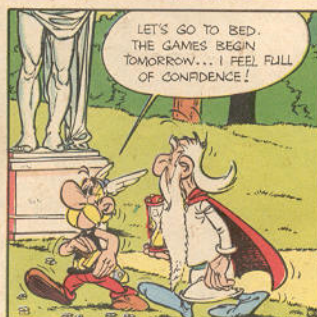
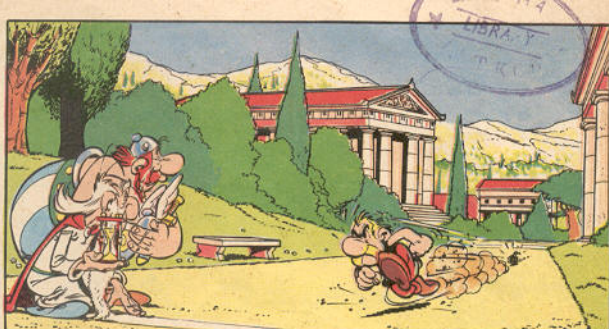
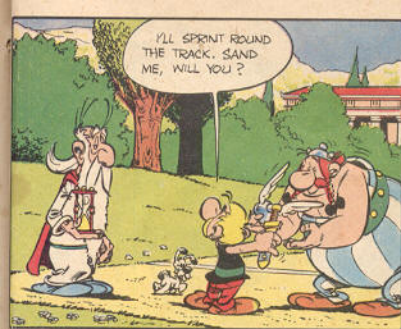


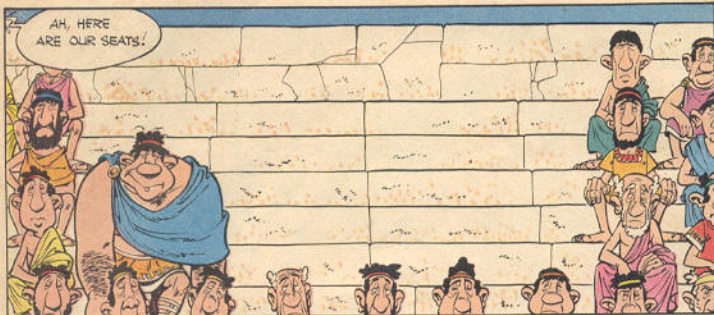




* THE BATTLE OF GERGOVIA, 52 BC





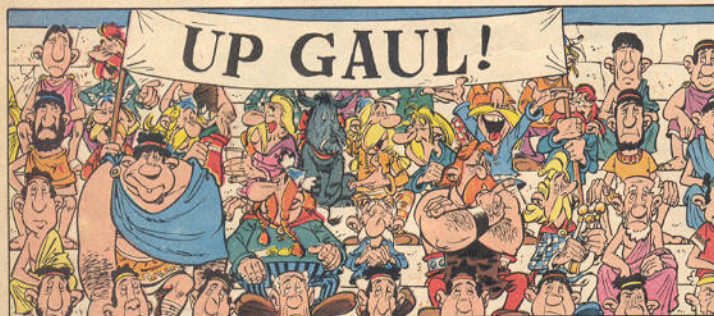


AH, HERE ARE OUR SEATS!

RIGHT! IT'S ALL SETTLED THEN - WE ACT IN A CALM AND DIGNIFIED WAY AND RESPECT OUR OPPONENTS; WE'LL BE GOOD SPORTS AND NOT MAKE OURSELVES CONSPICUIOUS



AS IF WE WOULD!



UP GAUL!

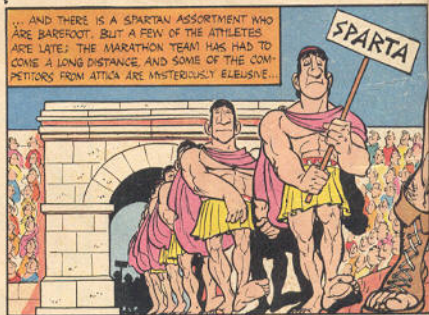
AFTER TAKING THE OLYMPIC OATH ON THE ALTAR OF ZEUS HERKIOS...



WE ARE FREE MEN OF PURE HELLENIC BLOOD WHO HAVE NEVER COMMITTED ANY CRIMINAL OR SACRILEGIOUS ACTS. WE SWEAR TO ABIDE BY THE RULES OF THE GAMES...



... THE ATHLETES ENTER THE STADIUM. THE MEN FROM THERMOPYLAE ARE THE FIRST TO PASS BY. EVERYONE IS BACK IN TRAINING! THE ATHLETES FROM MAGNÉSIA ARE ON A MILK DIET. THE TEAM FROM GOS IS ON LETTUCE AND EVEN THE MEN OF SALAMIS HAVE GONE VEGETARIAN...



... AND THERE IS A SPARTAN ASSORTMENT WHO ARE BAREFOOT, BUT A FEW OF THE ATHLETES ARE LATE! THE MARATHON TEAM HAS HAD TO COME A LONG DISTANCE, AND SOME OF THE COMPETITORS FROM ATTICA ARE MYSTERIOUSLY EMBESUED.

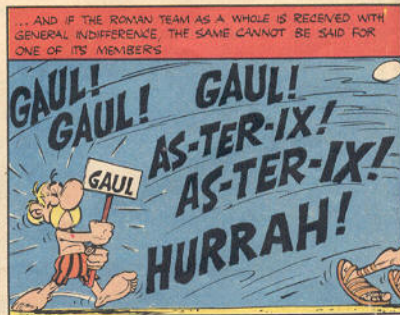


RHODES HAS SENT ONLY ONE REPRESENTATIVE, A COLOSSUS...



YOHOO! BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU!

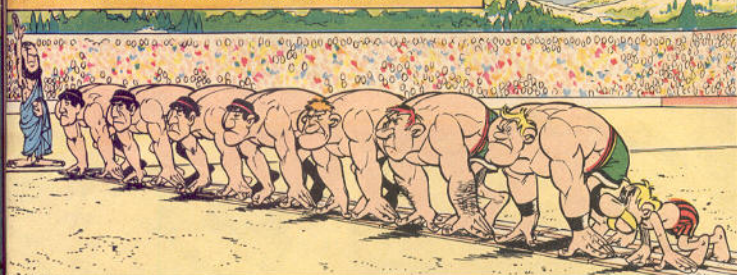
SSH! LET'S BE GOOD SPORTS!



... AND IF THE ROMAN TEAM AS A WHOLE IS RECEIVED WITH GENERAL INDIFFERENCE, THE SAME CANNOT BE SAID FOR ONE OF ITS MEMBERS

GAUL! GAUL! GAUL! AS-TER-IX! AS-TER-IX! HURRAH!

THE ATHLETES, BOTH GREEK AND ROMAN, GET INTO POSITION FOR THE FIRST RACE: 20 LAPS UP AND DOWN THE STADIUM. THEY ARE ALL AT THE PRESENT TENSE...



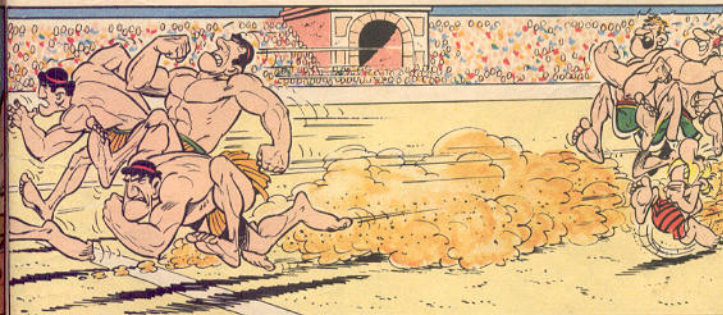
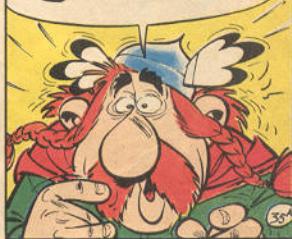
...AND THE STARTER'S MOOD IS IMPERATIVE...



GAUL! GAUL! AS-TER-IX! AS-TER-IX!



GAU...!



SPARTA



NOT BAD, ASTERIX

THOSE SPARTANS ARE STRONG. THE ROMANS ARE VERY FIT TOO



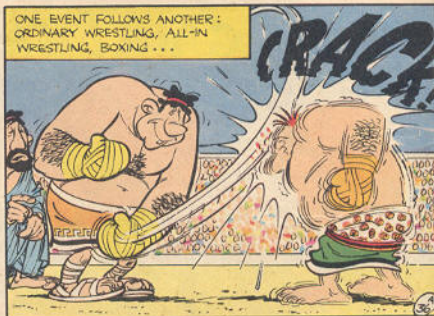
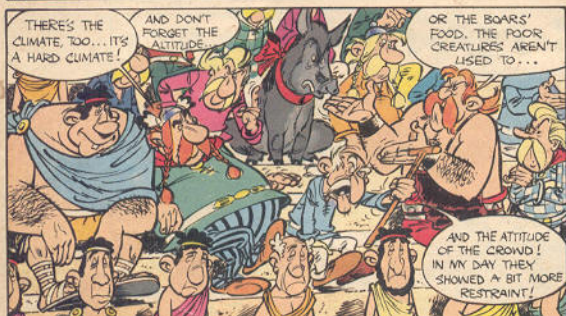
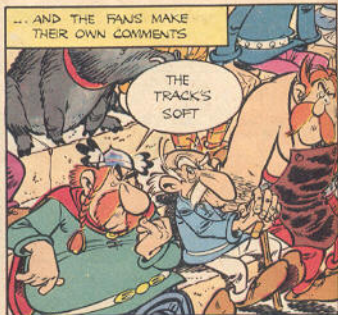
IF YOU HADN'T MADE YOUR POTION IN A CAULDRON, I COULD HAVE ENTERED FOR THAT RACE! IF ONLY YOU'D USED AN ORDINARY POT... JUST MY LUCK!



THIS IS NOT A QUESTION OF TAKING POT LUCK * OBEUX

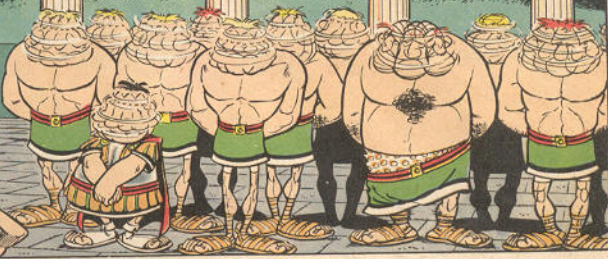


* WE SEE HERE THE ORIGIN OF AN EXPRESSION WHICH HAS COME DOWN TO US FROM ANCIENT OLYMPIC TIMES



AT THE END OF THE DAY, THE ATHLETES RETURN TO THE SACRED ENCLOSURE TO TAKE STOCK...

WELL, IN VIEW OF YOUR BRILLIANT RESULTS, DO YOU THINK JULIUS CAESAR IS GOING TO BE PLEASED?



IN THE BOULEUTERION, THE OLYMPIC SENATE, THE MAGISTRATES, HELLANODIKAI, PRIESTS AND OFFICIALS HAVE ASSEMBLED. PHILIBUSTER, THE GREAT ORATOR, IS IN THE CHAIR

NOBLE AND VENERABLE FRIENDS! OUR OWN ATHLETES ARE GOING TO WIN ALL THE PALMS, AS USUAL!

THAT'S RIGHT!

BY ATHENE!

BY APOLLO!

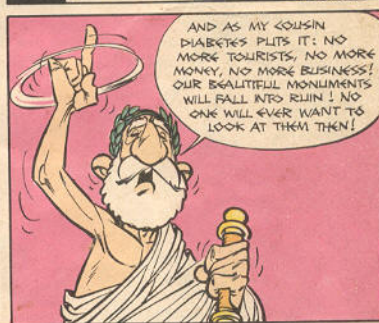
UP WITH US!



NONE THE LESS, IF WE DON'T GIVE THESE ROMAN BARBARIANS THE CHANCE OF WINNING ONE PALM, TOURISTS WILL TAKE NO MORE INTEREST IN OUR GAMES...



AND AS MY COUSIN DIABETES PLITS IT: NO MORE TOURISTS, NO MORE MONEY, NO MORE BUSINESS! OUR BEAUTIFUL MONUMENTS WILL FALL INTO RUIN! NO ONE WILL EVER WANT TO LOOK AT THEM THEN!



BUT WE CAN'T ASK OUR ATHLETES TO CHEAT, JUST TO LET THESE DECADENT BARBARIANS WIN!



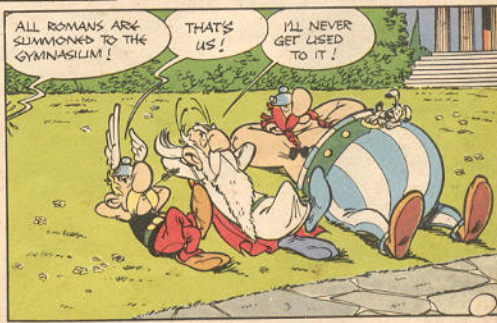
EUREKA! I THINK I HAVE IT!

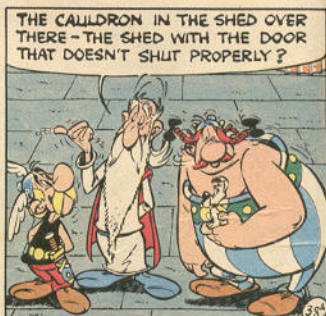
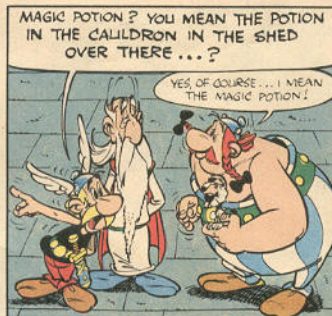
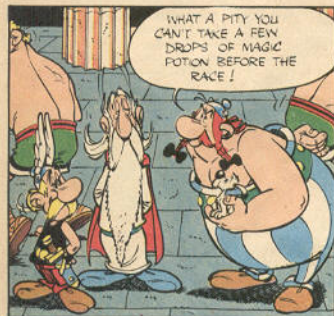
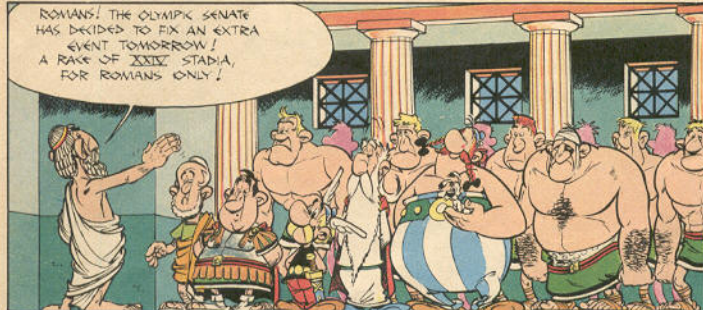


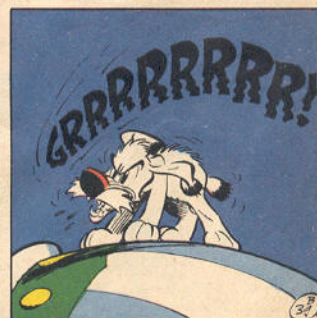
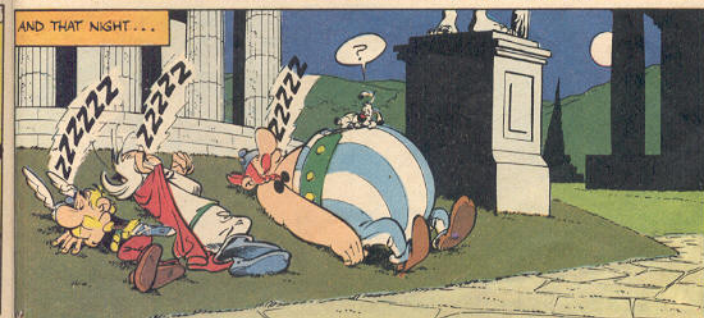
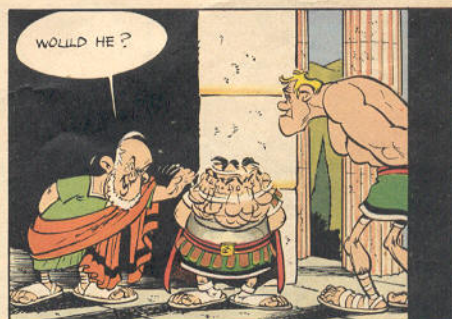
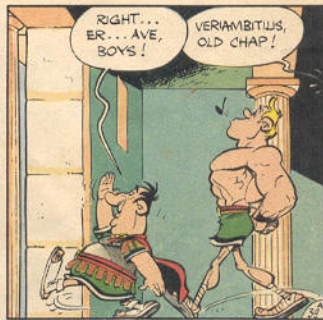
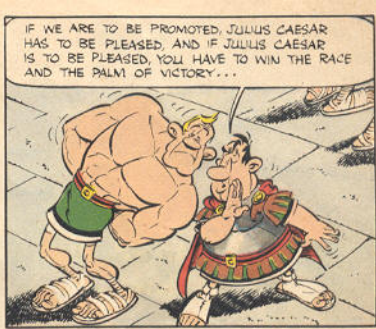
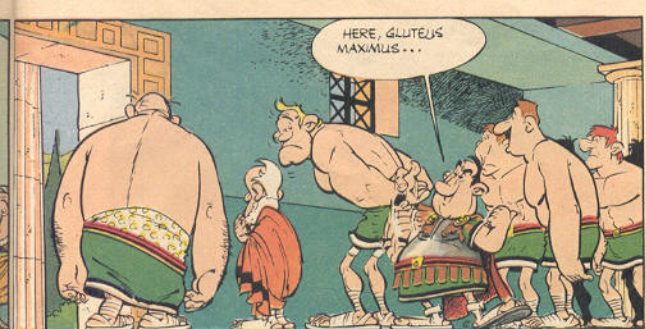
ALL ROMANS ARE SUMMONED TO THE GYMNASIUM!

THAT'S US!

I'LL NEVER GET USED TO IT!

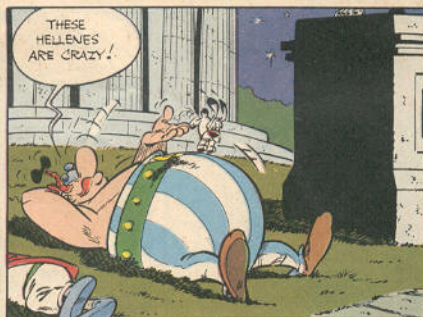
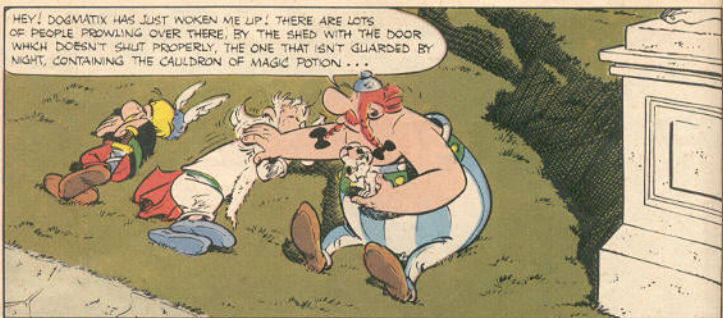




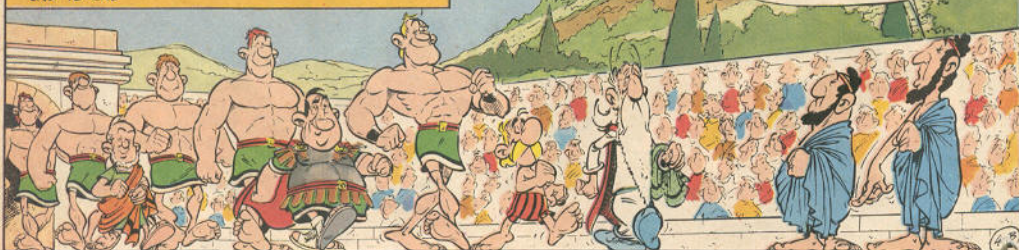


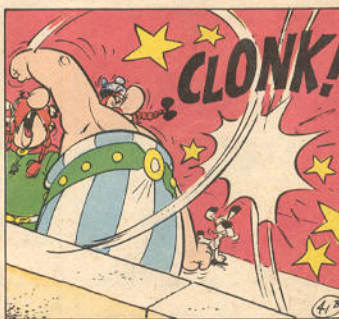
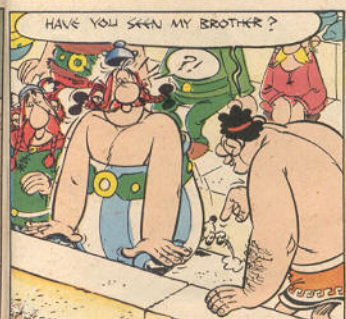
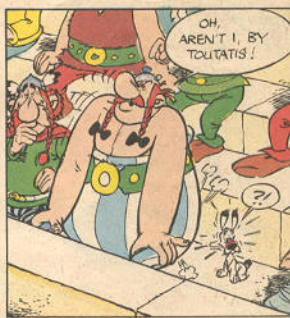
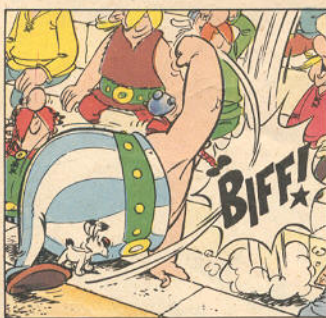
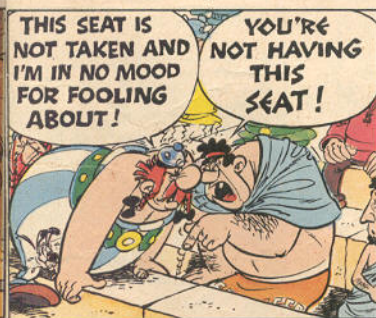
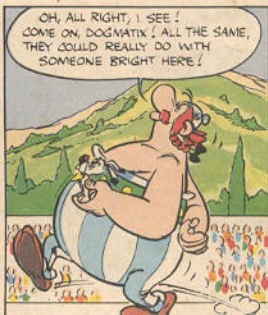
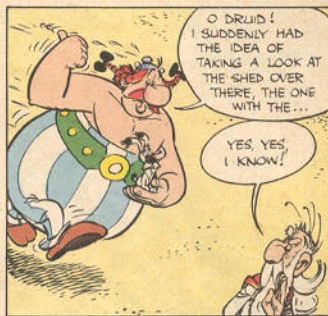
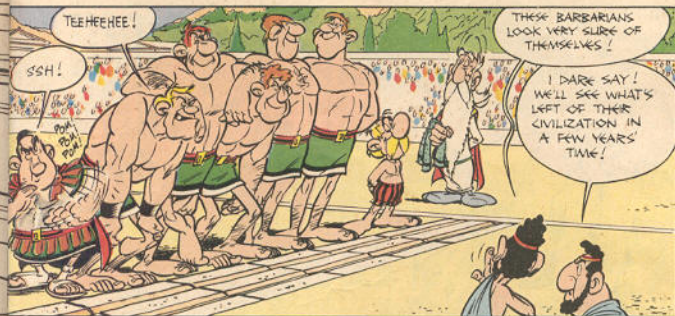


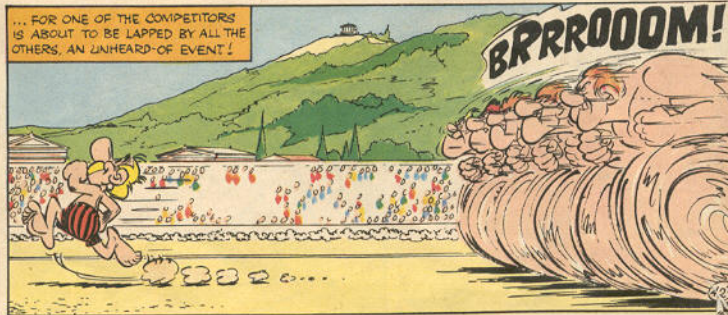
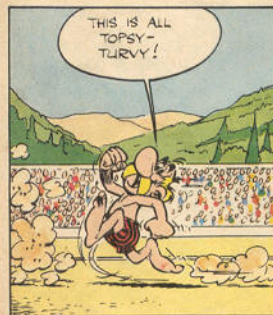
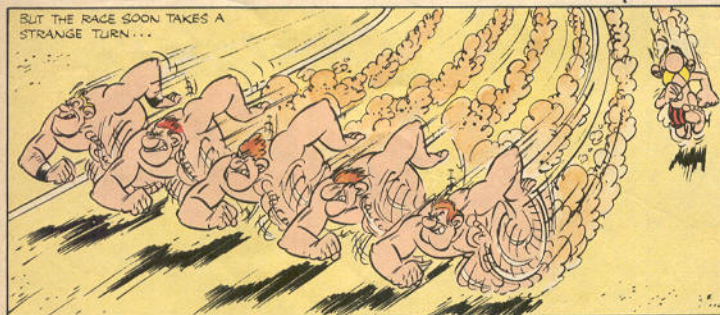
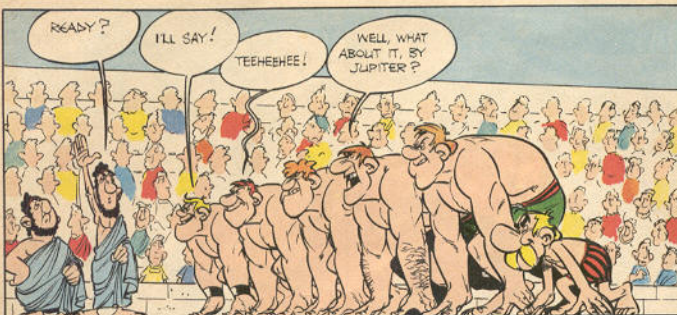
HEY! DOGMATIX HAS JUST WOKEN ME UP! THERE ARE LOTS OF PEOPLE PROWING OVER THERE, BY THE SHED WITH THE DOOR WHICH DOESN'T SHUT PROPERLY, THE ONE THAT ISN'T GUARDED BY NIGHT, CONTAINING THE CAULDRON OF MAGIC POTION...



IT IS THE DAY OF THE 24 STADIA RACE, I.E. 4.614 METRES, 48 CENTIMETRES, OR AS WE MIGHT PUT IT MORE SIMPLY TODAY, 14,400 SIZE 11 SHOES LAID END TO END

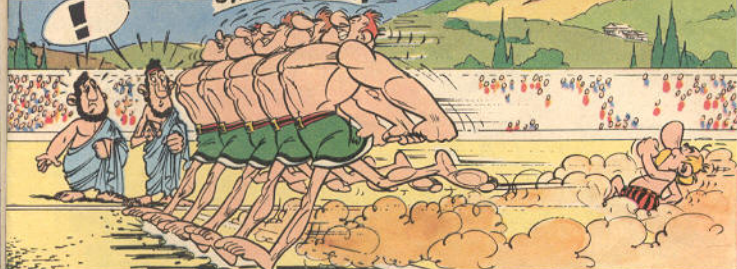






THEY REACH THE FINISHING LINE!

GNNGNGN!



IT MUST BE THEIR HABIT OF MARCHING IN RANKS, BY APOLLO!

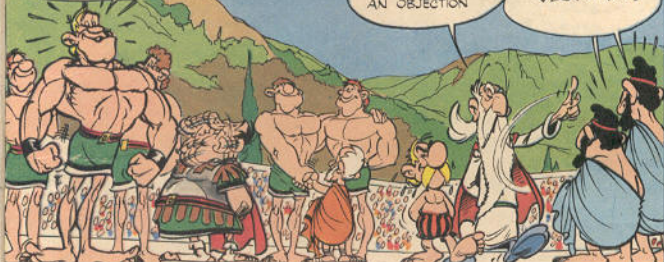
HOW ARE WE GOING TO GET ALL THIS LOT ON THE PODIUM, BY ARTEMIS?



CAESAR WILL BE PLEASED WON'T HE?

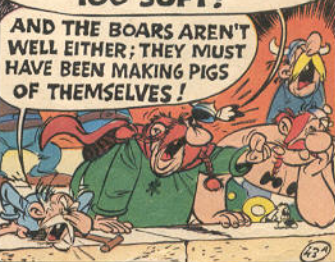
ONE MOMENT! I WISH TO RAISE AN OBJECTION

OBJECTION?



YES! THE TRACK WAS TOO SOFT!

AND THE BOARS AREN'T WELL EITHER; THEY MUST HAVE BEEN MAKING PIGS OF THEMSELVES!



I ACCUSE ALL WHO FINISHED FIRST OF BEING FULL OF MAGIC POTION UP TO THE EARS!

THIS IS A VERY SERIOUS ACCUSATION! CAN YOU PROVE IT?

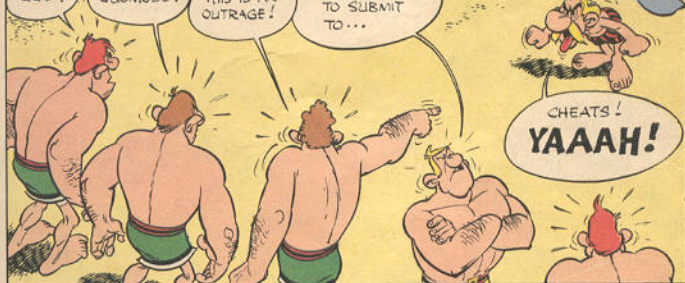


QUID?

QUOMODO?

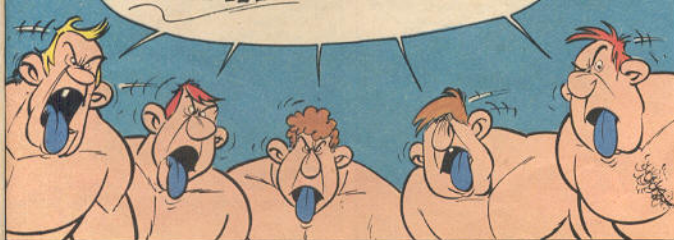
THIS IS AN OUTRAGE!

I REFUSE TO SUBMIT TO...



CHEATS!
YAAAH!

YAAAH YOURSELF!



LOOK! I ADDED SOME PERMITTED COLOURING MATTER TO THE CAULDRON OF MAGIC POTION... THOSE WHO DRANK IT HAVE ALL GOT BLUE TONGUES!

BY HERMES, YOU'RE RIGHT!



WE OUGHT TO HAVE HELD OUR TONGUES!

I'M FEELING RATHER BLUE MYSELF!

THE OLYMPIC SENATE WILL CONSIDER THIS UNPRECEDENTED SITUATION!

A FEW MINUTES LATER...

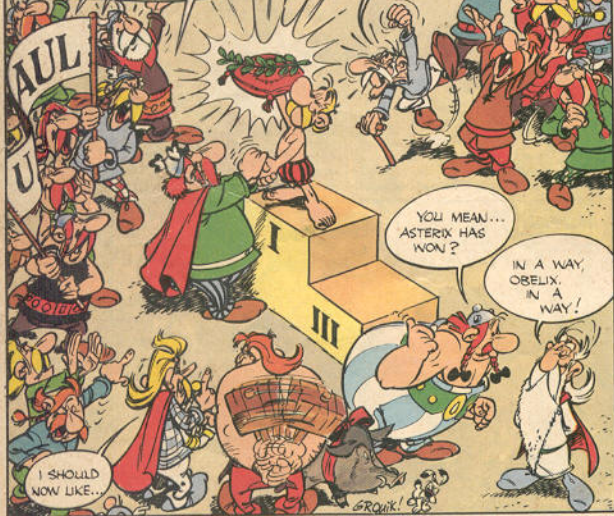
ALL COMPETITORS WHO DRANK THE MAGIC POTION ARE DISQUALIFIED! THE PALM OF VICTORY IS THEREFORE AWARDED TO... ASTERIX!

ASTERIX! HURRAH FOR ASTERIX!

I ALWAYS KNEW THE LITTLE FELLOW HAD IT IN HIM!

THE CROWD GOES WILD WITH ENTHUSIASM, AND IT IS ON THIS NOTE...

AHA, AHA, AHA!



YOU MEAN... ASTERIX HAS WON?

IN A WAY, OBELIX, IN A WAY!

I SHOULD NOW LIKE...



... THAT WE LEAVE THE LAND OF THE HELLENES. OUR FRIENDS HAVE A QUIET CRUISE HOME...

I'VE GOT THAT SINKING FEELING AGAIN...

... TO THEIR LITTLE VILLAGE, WHERE UNDER A STARRY SKY, THEY CELEBRATE THEIR OLYMPIC VICTORY - SOMETHING THAT DOES A LOT FOR ANY NATION'S PRESTIGE.

WHAT PUZZLES ME IS THE WAY THEY DISCRIMINATE AGAINST CAULDRONS...

EAT UP, DO, ORELIX!

AS FOR THE GREEK GIRLS, MY DEAR FELLOW - ABSOLUTELY STATUESQUE!

WHERE'S YOUR PALM OF VICTORY, ASTERIX?

DON'T TELL THE OTHERS BUT I GAVE IT TO SOMEONE WHOSE NEED WAS GREATER THAN MINE, BY TOUTATIS!

AND FOR ONCE... FOR ONCE CAESAR IS PLEASED!

LEGIONARY GLUTEUS MAXIMUS, I MAKE YOU A CENTURION! CENTURION GAIUS VERIAMBILIUS, I PROMOTE YOU TO TRIBUNE!

THE END

