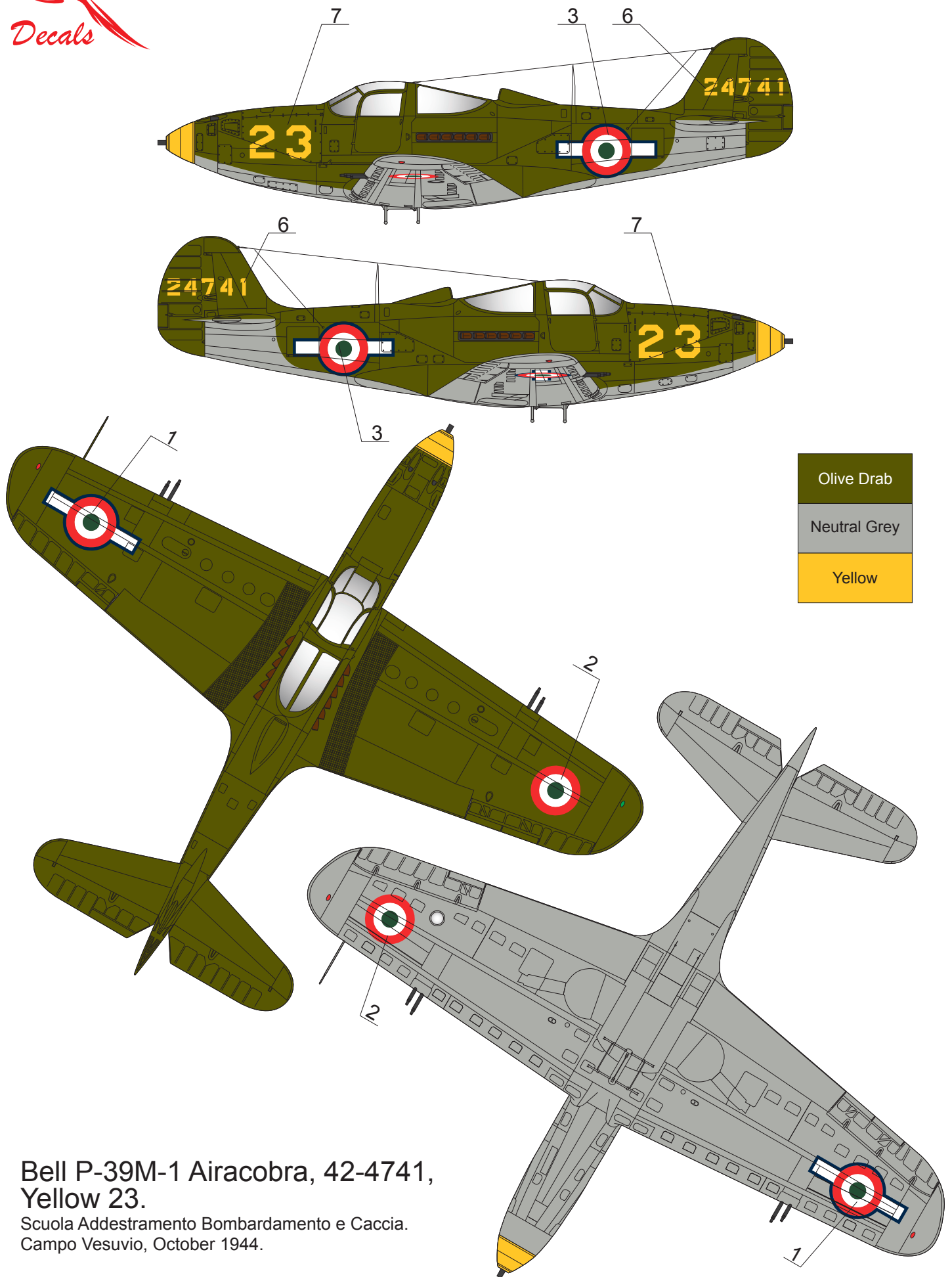
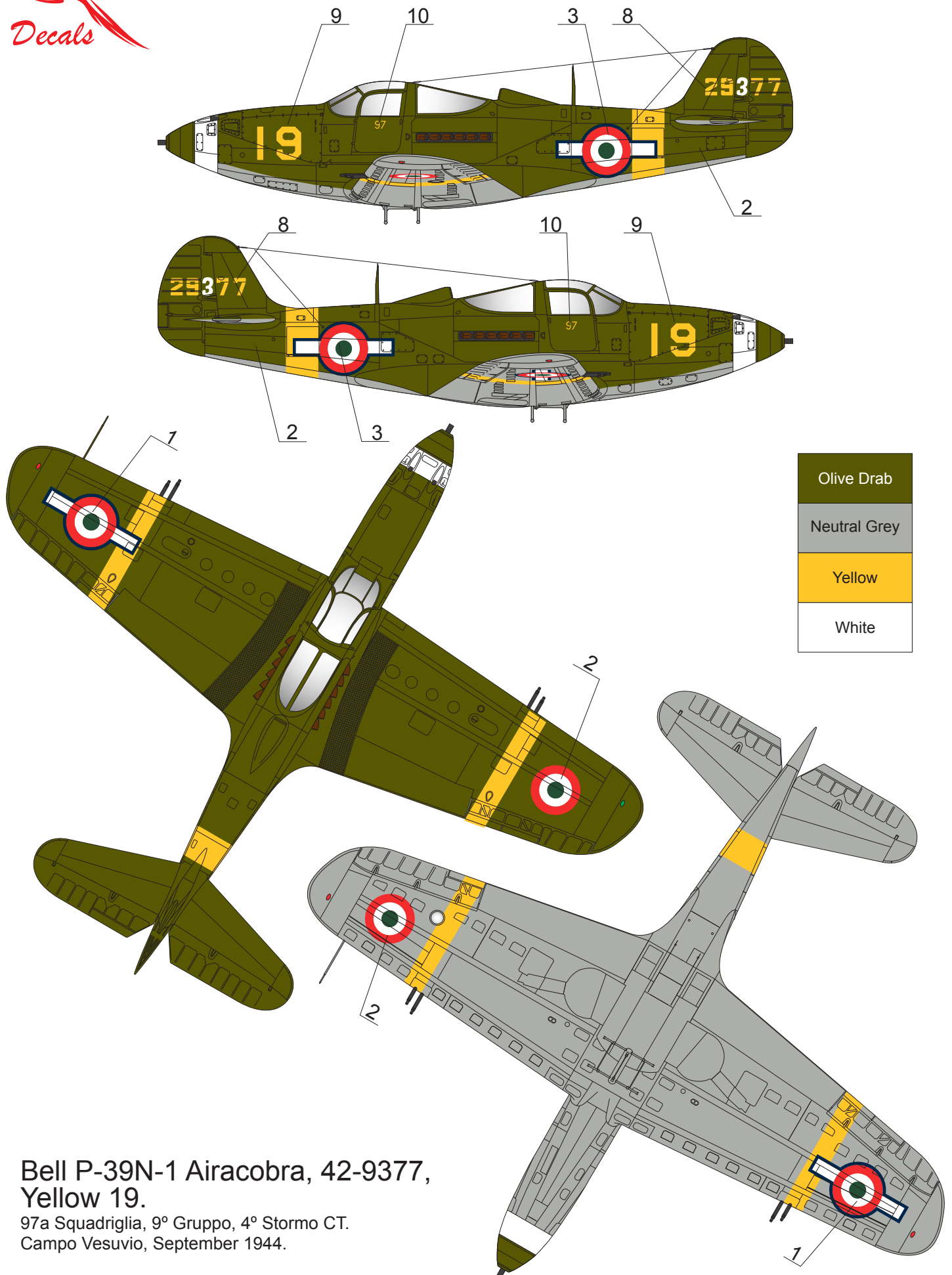


Bell P-39N-1 Airacobra, 42-9199 J  
9° Gruppo, 4° Stormo CT.  
Campo Vesuvio, September 1944.



Bell P-39M-1 Airacobra, 42-4741,  
Yellow 23.

Scuola Addestramento Bombardamento e Caccia.  
Campo Vesuvio, October 1944.



**Bell P-39N-1 Airacobra, 42-9377,  
Yellow 19.**

97a Squadriglia, 9° Gruppo, 4° Stormo CT.  
Campo Vesuvio, September 1944.





When the Italians started receiving Bell P-39s from the U. S. Army Air Force, planes were in typical American camouflage - Olive Drab upper surfaces and Neutral Grey undersides. First changes were just limiting to overpaint the tricolour roundels directly on the American stars and bars. The latter being more properly removed only at a later stage, together with the large yellow serial numbers on tail and (not always anyway) the original personal insignia of the American pilots, sometimes retained anyway even by the Italian pilots, evidently appreciating them. As a later stage, when the aircraft started being overhauled by the Italian technical units at Galatina, they were fully repainted as evidence by some aircraft in „clean“ liveries instead of the notably worn out paintwork originally carried.

Even if the source of paints used for such overhauls is not exactly known, it's very probable the Americans directly supplied also the original paints of the appropriate shade.

info based on Paolo Waldis & Marino De Bortoli „Camouflage and Markings of the Italian Air Force 1943-1945“ books.

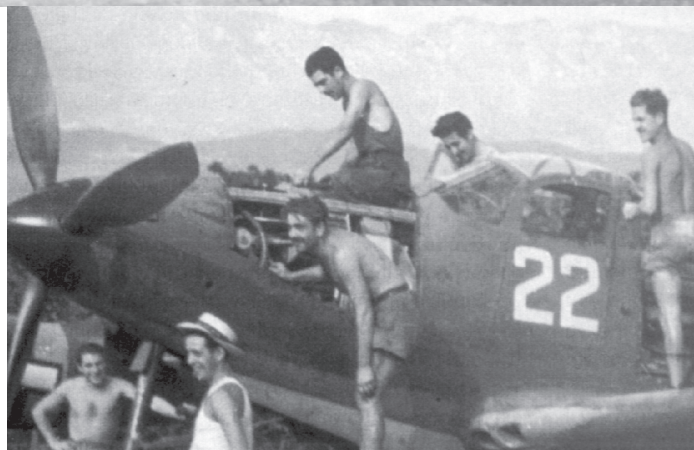


photo credits: Marco Mattioli „Bell P-39 Airacobra in Italian Service“ book.

