



VELO VERT #278 - JUIN 2015

Plaquettes
Sintered Metal &
Ceramic Organic

VAR

TEXTE & PHOTOS > S. CORRADINI



Since the appearance of disc brakes, the pad market shows a tremendous fertility. You can find pads of any origins and prices. Among the most recent brands in the market, there's VAR, the French brand specialized in professional bike tools. Recently the company also targeted consumers with a line of consumer tools and care products and also these pads that we tested for several months in various trail conditions and under various weather conditions.

We have tested both compounds available i.e. "Ceramic Organic" and "Sintered Metal". As mentioned in VAR catalogue, both types of pads provide a powerful, accurate and consistent stopping power. Things are described in a different way but it boils down to the same thing.

So what are the differences? The first ones contain ceramic particles agglomerated with an organic binder, the second ones with fine particles of sintered metal. According to our experience, we can confirm that generally speaking organic pads provide a very powerful braking while preserving brake rotor but they wear out faster than sintered pads that provide a bit less aggressive stopping power but are easier to adjust and often more durable.

We have tested simultaneously both types of pads on Shimano XTR calipers whose braking performance is very convincing with original pads. One set for the front and another for the rear while switching pads at mid-test. Braking power proved to be consistent and dependable with both configurations. No unpleasant surprise.

We were surprised by the stopping power delivered by the VAR Organic Ceramic pads that are on the verge to be "violent" and you must have a good feel to handle decelerations. Stopping power is easier to adjust with Sintered (Metal) pads but anyhow the power is still there just like with the original Shimano pads that got worn out pretty quickly.

So it is actually a pretty good sign. After several months of use, disassembly reveals the low level of wear and tear of both sets of pads. Surprisingly Ceramic Organic pads are not more worn out than metallic.

We notice that both types of compounds show signs of regular wear which proves that brakes are adjusted properly but also that compounds are made of homogeneous materials and quality of pad production.

Compatibility

All brands and types of brakes: Avid-Sram, Shimano, Formula, Magura, Hayes, Hope

- + **Powerful stopping power**
- + **Exceptional durability**
- **Nothing**