

Review: Effetto Mariposa Carogna tubular adhesive tape

RATING **9/10**

There is perhaps no greater rite of passage in a mechanic's life than gluing tubular tires. For the rest of us, the process is nothing but a goopy pain in the neck. Effetto Mariposa developed Carogna double-sided adhesive tape to make the tubular mounting experience quick and painless.

It works amazingly well — but you'll need to take some care to mount it properly, or you may run into failure pretty quickly. After a solid year of riding the Carogna tape between Clement's (now Donnelly) PDX tires and Zipp 303 Firecrest rims, the tires are still solidly mounted.

Carogna is a double-sided adhesive tape made from a semi-structural acrylic glue and another glue developed for underwater use. Because the tape has some structure, it fills the gap between the lowest part of the rim and the tire itself. That means there should be a consistent application all the way around the rim.

The tape itself comes in a roll and has a removable film on one side. Mounting the tape involves first cleaning the rim and tire and then applying the tape to the rim. Once in place, the tire is then mounted over the tape with the film still on it. This is a good opportunity to line up the tire perfectly, which is a significant advantage over a glue job. Didn't get it perfectly straight? No big deal, just reposition since the tire isn't adhered to the tape yet.



Next, it's time to remove the film by pulling on one end and separating it from the tape all the way around the tire. It's actually quite fun to pull the film off, and you'll be able to reposition the tire as you go so you can ensure a straight mount. But be careful: pull too hard and you'll tear the film. It's difficult to get it back out from between the tire and rim once this happens.

The installation takes just a few minutes, which is perhaps Carogna's biggest advantage. Whereas gluing tubulars can take hours, you'll be done mounting both your front and rear tires before you finish a beer. And for better or worse, you'll no longer get a contact high from your tubular glue.

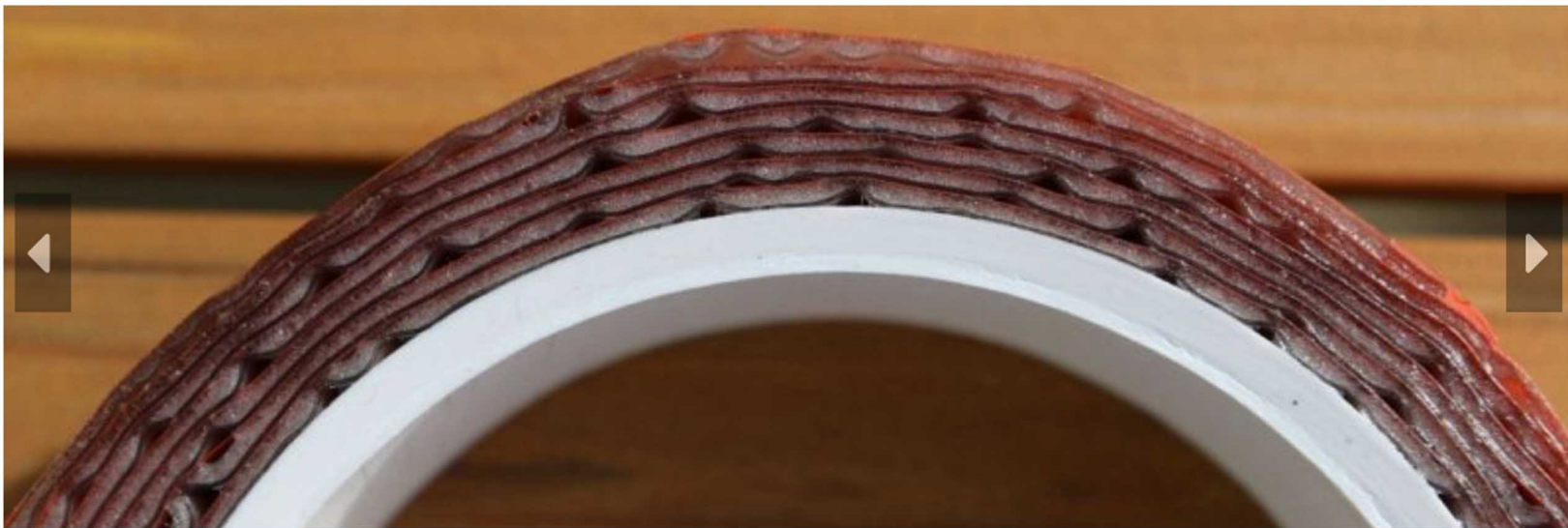
Installing the correct size is imperative. Carogna comes in three sizes:

S: 16.5mm wide (for rims between 17mm and 20mm wide)

SM: 20mm wide (for rims between 21mm and 24mm wide)

M: 25mm wide (for rims between 25mm and 28mm wide)

You'll want to choose the width that completely covers the width of your rim. Once it's installed, you can trim the excess with a sharp blade, but be very careful not to damage your rim or slice the tire in the process.



It's also vital that you install the Carogna tape in temperatures ranging from 70-100 degrees Fahrenheit. If you mount in temperatures lower than that, it's possible the tape won't adhere properly. Once the tire and tape are mounted, you'll need to pump up the tires and let them sit for at least eight hours, though Carogna says you'll want to let them sit for 24 hours for full adhesion.

In practice, we've had generally good results with one exception. Lennard Zinn first tested the tape in 2015 on cyclocross wheels and had no problems with the mounting process or long-term adhesion. **A year later** it was all but impossible to pull Lennard's tires off the rim by hand. But I easily pulled my cyclocross tires away from the rim after my first mounting experience. And when I say easily, I mean it took no effort at all, as though the tire was simply mounted on the rim with no tape or glue.

After a second try, the tape adhered with no problems. After over a year of riding through mud, dust, rock strikes, and low tire pressure, the tires are still stuck solidly to the rim. Deflating the tire and prying it away from the rim seems futile; to get these tires off, I'll need some elbow grease and possibly some Carogna remover. The tires seem to be mounted just as solidly as they would be glued, if not more solidly, even after long-term abuse.



What changed between the first try and the second try? Nothing, except for one step in the process: The first time I mounted the tires, I cleaned the rim with isopropyl alcohol. The tape did not adhere properly. The second time, I used the same alcohol, and once dried, I used Effetto Mariposa's Carogna remover to ensure there was absolutely nothing on the rim that could compromise the tape's application.

The takeaway: Mounting the tape and tire properly is exceptionally important. The rim must be perfectly clean, and it helps to also give the tire a wipe-down with isopropyl alcohol, acetone, or Naphtha. Carogna recommends using alcohol or mineral spirits. A smooth rim surface is preferable to a rough one, so make sure there's no excess glue from previous tire mountings on the rim or the tire. (And do not scuff the rim!)

It was hard to endorse Carogna after initial testing, given the mixed results. However, it's likely the problem was our mounting procedure and not the product. Now that we've given it a full year to prove itself, it's clear Carogna is the real deal. But keep in mind our testing took place exclusively in cyclocross settings, not on road tubulars. In theory, the Carogna tape should create an even stronger bond with road tires that are run at much higher pressures than cyclocross tires, and given its bond after a year of use in cyclocross conditions, we'd be comfortable using this tape on the road too.