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Casey Dellacqua climbs to career-best ranking

June 17, 2014

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Casey Dellacqua Photo: Dallas Kilponen

After career-saving shoulder surgery, a foot operation and countless cortisone injections, Australian tennis star Casey Dellacqua now has a best-ever world ranking.

Continuing her remarkable resurgence, Dellacqua has risen to No.36 in the rankings following her unseeded charge to the semi-finals at Birmingham at the weekend.

The West Australian was ranked outside the world's top 200 last September before beginning her improbable climb with a run to the fourth round of the Australian Open in January.

A three-time grand slam doubles runner-up last year, Dellacqua's renewed focus on singles also led to a quarter-final appearance at the prestigious Indian Wells Masters in March and a victory over Australian No.1 Samantha Stosur in Birmingham.

Despite narrowly missing a first-ever grand slam seeding for Wimbledon starting on Monday, Dellacqua's improved standing eclipses her previous career-best ranking of No.39 achieved back in 2008.

Dellacqua's singles revival began following the birth of her first child last August and the 29-year-old readily attributes her resurgence to being blissfully content off court.

But her long-time conditioner Giselle Martin - a former fitness coach of Stosur, Martina Navratilova and Monica Seles - said Dellacqua's rebirth was also a reward for her perseverance in the face of adversity.

"Despite all the injuries and setbacks and all the obstacles I place in front of her, Casey is a true inspiration," Martin said.

"She is determined to make the most of her second opportunity and it's awesome to see her getting such great results."

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