

SportsMonday

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FIRST WITH THE WEEKEND ACTION

Queenslander Samantha Stosur's secret weapon in her bid for the quarter-finals

NATURAL WINNER

By Darren Walton

MELBOURNE: A punishing new training regime and an organic lifestyle have helped transform Australia's last singles' hope Samantha Stosur from grand slam flop to title contender:

Stosur won just one match at the four grand slam tournaments in a despicable 2005 season before morphing into arguably the fittest player on circuit under internationally-renowned Sydney physical trainer Giselle Tirado.

The reward for the 21-year-old's peak conditioning is a fourth-round Australian Open showdown tonight with former world No.1 Martina Hingis.

As the last remaining Australian player in the singles, Stosur knows playing Hingis in her comeback tournament guarantees that their match will earn top billing on Rod Laver Arena.

"It's a tough match but I've got

nothing to lose and I just want to go out there and enjoy it," Stosur said yesterday.

"Before Giselle, I was terrible ... well, maybe not terrible but I was a very average trainer."

"I had nothing set out physically."

Stosur has complemented her newfound professionalism with a totally organic lifestyle.

"Even her shampoo, conditioner, soap and toothpaste are organic," Tirado said.

"Keep her free of chemicals and try to keep her as organic as possible."

"And no Coko," said Stosur, who gradually began backing off from physical work and started hitting balls just after Christmas.

See pages 4-5 for a full round-up of all the tennis action.



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