



BY TIM KENN

HANDYMAN

THERE ARE LOTS OF THINGS THAT HINES WARD CAN DO ON A FOOTBALL FIELD. BUT WHAT HE'S DOING OFF IT COULD TURN PITTSBURGH INTO A REAL SUPER BOWL CONTENDER.

Hines Ward is a teacher. He has taught defensive backs to be wary of his presence lest they find themselves laid out like a felled tree by one of his savage blocks. He has taught his employers, the Pittsburgh Steelers, to ignore the NFL actuarial tables that reflexively dismiss the potential of a six-foot, 205-pound wide receiver with one ACL who can't run all that fast or jump all that high. He has taught fans that a man can average 100 catches and 1,165 yards over three seasons while conducting himself like a thorough professional and remain, for all intents and purposes, a complete unknown in the world's most hyperpublicized sport. @ But perhaps Ward's most important lesson was taught during the first week of training camp. The pupil was rookie quarterback Ben Roethlisberger, and the lesson was simple: volume is important. If they can't hear you, your authority is diminished, if not altogether neutered. If they can't hear you, you don't exist. And, significant for the purposes of their profession, if they can't hear you, they can't run the damned play. @ This lesson was made necessary when Ward and Roethlisberger