



people

keeping it real

Tracy Roberts' new book focuses on relaxation and obtainable goals in order to make you a better golfer

BY PAUL STERMAN

Tracy Roberts is a PGA pro at Rancho San Joaquin.

Life can't get much better for Tracy Roberts these days. The PGA professional from Mission Viejo has written a book due out this month — "Play REAL Golf" — where he offers advice regarding golfers' "emotional mechanics" and unveils a system to help players of all levels improve their mental approach to the sport.

It's also clear that Roberts is a man lucky enough to love his work. His days start early in the morning and are filled with coaching and teaching. Coach of the boys and girls golf teams at Woodbridge High School in Irvine, Roberts is also a certified PGA teaching professional who gives lessons to individuals of all ages and playing abilities at the Rancho San Joaquin Golf Practice Center in Irvine.

"How can you not love a job where you're sharing golf with people all day?" Roberts asks with a smile. "I'm so lucky to be sharing this amazing game that is so important to me."

And about that coaching gig: Roberts' daughter Samantha, a junior at Woodbridge, is the No. 1 player on the girls squad.

"How many dads have the opportunity to spend three hours with their teenage daughters every afternoon?" he notes.

So, yes, Roberts is on a roll. But perhaps one reason why life is looking so good

is that he's one of those guys who always sees the glass as half full. A cheerful and enthusiastic teacher, he believes it's crucial to have a positive approach to life's various adventures — and that attitude has infused his coaching.

Besides leading the Woodbridge girls golf squad since the program started eight years ago, Roberts has also shepherded the boys team for 19 years, and he was the associate head coach of Woodbridge's boys and girls basketball teams for 10 years.

His many years of working with young athletes — and their fragile psyches — helped Roberts develop the system he calls "Play REAL Golf." (The book, which he co-wrote with PGA professional Stephen Plummer, is being put out by Dog Ear Publishing. Visit www.playrealgolf.com.) But its principles apply to individuals of all ages, he stresses.

The acronym "REAL" stands for Relax, Evaluate, Activate and Let it go. Roberts elaborates on each theme, presenting a methodology to give people various and specific steps they can rely on when they feel themselves crumbling on the course.

When people compete, he explains, they often tighten