

# Michael Miller looking to change his life at U.S. Open.



By: [Allen Etzler](#) | June 14, 2016 9:19 pm

OAKMONT, Pa. – Standing at the driving range two days before the biggest tournament of his life, Mike Miller was approached by family friend and Golf Channel instruction host Michael Breed.

Breed turned to Miller’s father and swing coach Bob Miller to make small talk.

“I’m just watching,” Bob Miller said of his involvement in his son’s major championship debut.

Mike Miller turned around as if to say, “yeah right.”

“He can never just watch,” Mike Miller said.

Truth is, though, Bob Miller was relegated to watching when his son made the biggest decision of his life, quitting college at Penn State in 2010 and having a go at professional golf.

“At first that was difficult, but we were behind him the entire way,” Bob Miller said.

Now, at 24, the arduous journey has culminated at the most difficult course of all, Oakmont Country Club, site of the 2016 U.S. Open.

After years of toiling on the European Tour, mini tours and the Web.com Tour, Miller is at one of golf’s biggest tournaments with an opportunity to quickly make a name for himself.

“My whole life could change in four days,” he said.

That’s if he can manage to play well against a field filled with the best players in the world.

And Miller found out about those players pretty quickly. On Sunday morning at Oakmont, he walked onto the driving range early with only two players practicing. He realized on one side of him was World No. 5 Rickie Fowler and on the other side was Jimmy Walker.

Miller walked all the way over to the other side of the range.

Hoping not to pull a Kevin Costner in “Tin Cup,” Miller just wanted to make sure he got the ball airborne.

“I was here with my girlfriend Casey, I looked at her, she looked at me, and I said ‘let’s just make sure we take a divot.’”

It was an OK shot by Miller’s standards. He looked back to his girlfriend.

“It’s over now. (The nerves) can’t get any worse,” Miller said.

Nerves should continue to fade for Miller, who has spent time playing against some of the world's best players on the European Tour. In fact, Miller credits an event on the European Tour for turning his career around.

Miller made the cut at the 2014 Irish Open, a field that included the likes of Masters champion Danny Willett, Rory McIlroy and Graeme McDowell. McIlroy missed the cut that week.

But the turning point came on Saturday, when Miller was in the middle of struggling to a 79. Spain's Rafa Cabrera Bello offered some words of encouragement after seeing the youngster having issues.

"He said, 'You're going to have so many bad Saturdays. But you have to be here on Saturday in order to have a bad Saturday.' I just thought that was so cool that he took the time to come over and just to put his arm around me and explain to me what this game is all about," Miller said. "And you can't put so much pressure on yourself. You have to let it happen. That's something I've learned and improved on is the mental side of the game."

Miller will need that mental strength this week, as Oakmont is known to wreak havoc on a player's psyche. He understands the toughness of the course, but thinks that plays into his favor as well.

"That just means it's as tough for everybody else as it is for me," he said.