



SWPSA Selection Criteria – Best Defender

The **Defender of the Tournament** should recognise a player who is not only hard to beat but also contributes to the overall team structure, communication, and counter-defence. **This is exclusively for the U19 Girls and Boys age group.**

1. Defensive Effectiveness

- Consistently prevents opponents from scoring through strong body position and awareness.
 - Wins one-on-one contests (especially against the hole).
 - Minimises fouls and exclusions while still applying pressure effectively.
 - Excellent positioning — stays between opponent and goal.
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2. Hole Defence (if applicable)

- Reads and neutralises centre-forward plays.
 - Uses body strength, timing, and balance to deny goal-side advantage.
 - Communicates clearly with the goalkeeper and perimeter defenders.
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3. Game Intelligence & Anticipation

- Anticipates passes, drives, and counters before they happen.
 - Makes smart decisions when to press, drop, or help.
 - Adjusts to different attacking systems and player matchups.
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4. Transition Defence

- Quick to recover after turnovers.
- Cuts off counter-attacks and helps organise defensive structure early.
- Tracks back even when not directly marking an opponent.



5. Communication & Leadership

- Directs teammates defensively — vocal, organised, and composed.
 - Helps coordinate presses, drops, and man-down structure.
 - Encourages and motivates others during high-pressure moments.
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6. Man-Down (Extra-Man) Defence

- Reads attacking patterns and adapts quickly.
 - Effective shot-blocking, lane coverage, and anticipation.
 - Maintains discipline — knows when to press and when to drop.
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7. Physical Presence & Conditioning

- Strong in body contact without unnecessary fouls.
 - Maintains defensive intensity throughout the match and tournament.
 - Uses strength and stamina effectively in one-on-one battles.
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8. Attitude & Sportsmanship

- Respects opponents, referees, and officials.
 - Plays hard but fair; shows composure under provocation.
 - Positive influence on teammates and coaches.
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