



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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

8. Attitude & Sportsmanship

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