

Mike Penders

Goalkeeper • 20 yrs • Strasbourg • Ligue 1 • 2025/2026
Belgium • Left foot • 200cm



Technical:

Technically, Penders stands out most for how natural he looks in possession. He is extremely comfortable receiving the ball under minimal and moderate pressure, with a clean first touch that allows him to play quickly without needing to reset his body. His passing technique supports a short build-up game, and he shows confidence playing passes into central areas rather than just defaulting to wide or safe options. There is also evidence of variety in his distribution, as he is capable of adjusting his weight and trajectory depending on game state, rather than playing with a fixed pattern. Overall, his technical level suggests that he is a goalkeeper who is being developed to participate actively in possession rather than simply circulate the ball.

Tactical:

Tactically, Penders operates much higher and more proactively than a traditional goalkeeper. His positioning often resembles that of a spare defender during build-up phases, allowing his team to maintain numerical superiority in early possession and compress the pitch. He appears comfortable managing space behind the defensive line, stepping forward when appropriate to reduce distances rather than retreating automatically toward his goal. This suggests an understanding of risk management rather than pure conservatism. His role within the team structure indicates that he has a high level of trust from the coaching staff to execute a more demanding interpretation of the position, particularly in systems that want to control territory and rhythm.

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Mental:

Mentally, confidence is the defining feature of Penders' profile. He plays with clear conviction in his decisions, particularly in possession, and does not appear deterred by responsibility or potential error. His willingness to operate outside the box, demand involvement in the build-up, and continue playing proactively even in difficult moments reflects a goalkeeper comfortable with exposure. That mindset is critical for goalkeepers tasked with modern roles, where hesitation can be more damaging than execution errors. The overall impression is of a goalkeeper being encouraged to express his authority.

Physical:

Physically, Penders has a strong foundational goalkeeping profile. His height and reach provide natural coverage of the goal and allow him to command space effectively, especially in aerial situations. He moves efficiently rather than explosively, relying on anticipation and positioning to arrive early rather than reacting late. While he may not yet profile as an elite athlete, his coordination and balance allow him to carry out both sweeping actions and set positions without looking rushed. His physical attributes align well with a goalkeeper expected to operate higher and engage in actions away from the goal.

Conclusion:

Overall, Mike Penders profiles as a goalkeeper whose value extends beyond the traditional shot-stopping metrics. His comfort in possession, proactive positioning, and calm decision-making suggest this is a player being shaped for systems that demand control, territorial dominance, and goalkeeper involvement in build-up. While his development is still ongoing and certain aspects of his game will naturally sharpen with experience, the underlying profile points toward a modern, system-compatible goalkeeper. He looks less like a last-resort defender and more like an integrated part of the team's structure and this is a distinction that increasingly defines top-level goalkeeping today.

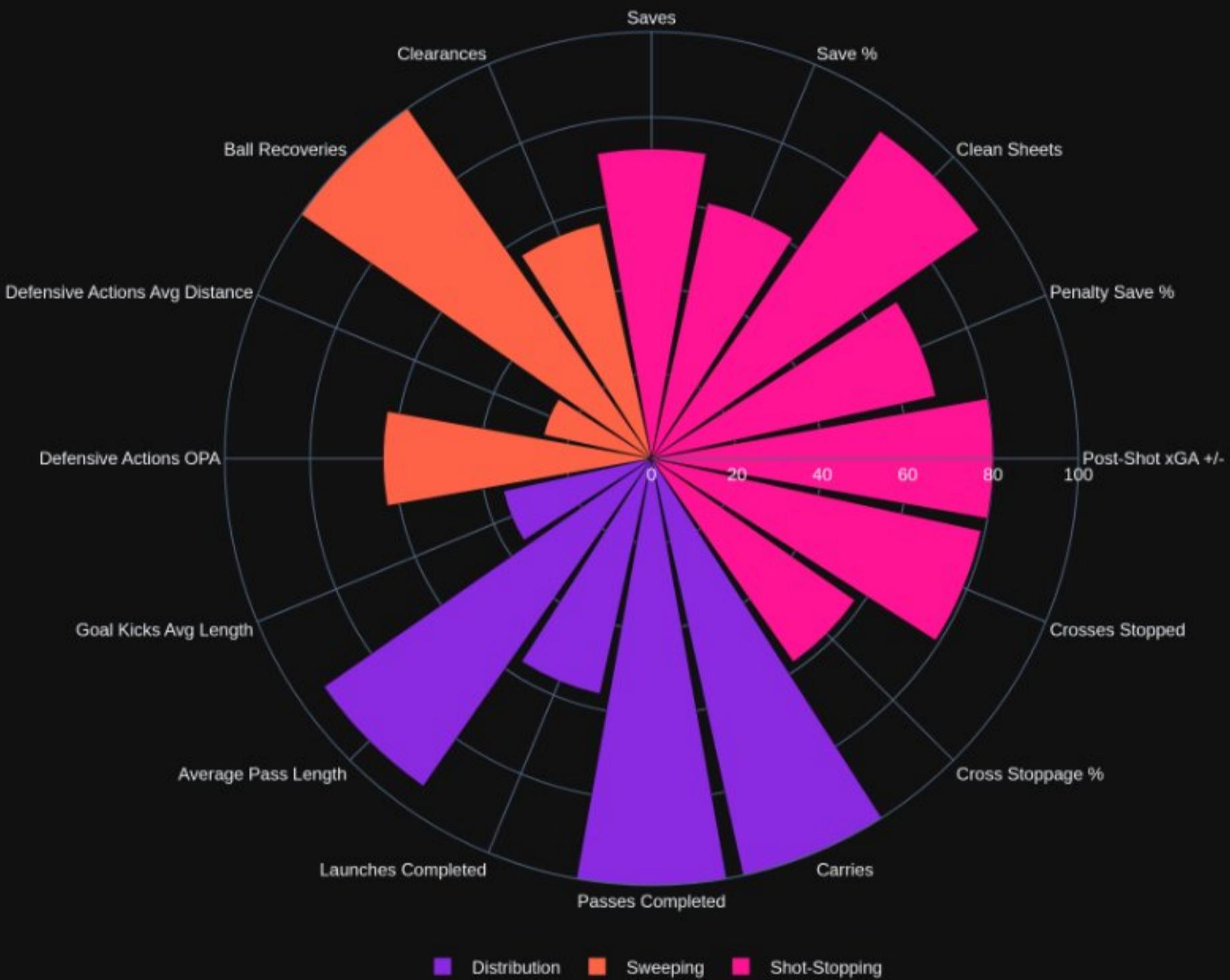
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Mike Penders – Scout Report

Compared to GK



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