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UCD have extended their lead at the top of the SSE Airtricity League First Division after a 1-0 away victory over Athlone Town.



The opening ten minutes of the game produced very little action, with both teams keeping the ball relatively well without threatening the opposition goal. In the the 11th minute, Athlone seemed to deal well with a UCD corner, however referee Garvin Taggart pointed to the spot after spotting an infringement from Nika Kalandarishvili in the penalty area.

UCD captain Gary O'Neill stepped up to take take the spot kick, dispatching it beyond Michael Fogarty into the bottom right hand corner.

They very nearly doubled their lead in the 22nd minute, when a mix up in the Athlone defence allowed Neil Farrugia to run through on goal, but Fogarty produced an excellent save to keep his side within touching distance. Fogarty was once again called into action from the resulting corner, producing a quick reaction save from a powerful Josh Collins header.

Despite Athlone playing reasonably well, UCD continued to create the better opportunities. Gary O'Neill almost grabbed his second when his shot from a very tight angle beat the Athlone

goalkeeper, only to rebound off the post.

In the ensuing scramble, Yoyo Mahdy's goal bound strike was cleared off the line by Baba Issaka. Athlone's best opportunity of the game came ten minutes before the interval, with a Brian Cabraley cross being met by Ollie Hamzat, who's shot from point blank range was blocked by an opposing defender.

The attacking intent displayed by Athlone in the opening period largely dissipated in the second half, never really threatening to equalise.

The closest UCD came to doubling their lead in the closing period came via Yoyo Mahdy, who's long mazing run ended with another smart save from Fogarty to stop what would have been a fantastic solo goal. Athlone never really came close to bringing the gam back on level terms, with UCD running out reasonably comfortable 1-0 winners.