Conor McGregor Loses Rape Case Appeal

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(FILES) Irish mixed martial arts fighter Conor McGregor (C) arrives to talk to the press after he pleaded guilty to a single violation of disorderly conduct in Brooklyn Criminal Court, on July 26, 2018. (Photo by TIMOTHY A. CLARY / AFP)  
  
Mixed martial arts fighter Conor McGregor lost an appeal in Ireland on Thursday over a civil court ruling last year awarding damages to a woman who accused him of rape.  
  
Three judges at the Court of Appeal in Dublin dismissed all the grounds for appeal raised by McGregor, 36.  
  
Jurors at Dublin’s High Court ain November awarded damages of almost 250,000 euros ($258,000) to Nikita Hand, 35, who alleged that McGergor raped her in a hotel in the Irish capital in 2018.  
  
The court heard allegations that McGregor “brutally raped and battered” Hand. The Irish sports star has insisted they had consensual sex.  
  
However Hand lost an assault lawsuit against a second man.  
  
Following the November ruling, McGregor was ordered to pay the entire costs of the case, estimated at around 1.5 million euros ($1.58 million).  
  
He appealed the jury’s decision, seeking a re-trial of the civil case against him.  
  
McGregor, a vocal figure in the Irish anti-immigration movement who in March met US President Donald Trump in the White House during a Saint Patrick’s Day visit, was not in court during a month of appeal hearings.  
  
His legal team argued that judicial errors occurred in the original trial, including in how he was cross-examined.  
  
After the ruling, Hand told reporters that the appeal had “retraumatised” her but that she can now “finally move on and try to heal”.  
  
“To every survivor out there, I know how hard it is, but please don’t be silenced, you deserve to be heard, you also deserve justice,” she said.  
  
Nicknamed “The Notorious,” McGregor is one of the biggest stars in the history of the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) mixed martial arts circuit, formerly holding the featherweight and lightweight titles.  
  
The Irishman was sued in a US court in January, accused of sexual assault at an NBA game in Miami in 2023.  
  
He has announced plans to run in Ireland’s presidential election this year.  
  
The vote to elect the country’s next president — a largely ceremonial role without executive power — must be held by mid-November but he faces a number of steep hurdles to get on the ballot.  
  
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