Woman wins case against MMA star Conor McGregor over rape allegation

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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)  
  
A woman on Friday won civil court damages claim against mixed martial arts fighter Conor McGregor over her allegation that he raped her in a Dublin hotel in 2018.  
  
McGregor, 36, shook his head as the jury returned their verdict awarding damages of 248,603 euros ($258,559) to Nikita Hand, who brought the case at Dublin’s High Court.  
  
The court was told that McGregor allegedly “brutally raped and battered” Hand at a hotel in south Dublin in December 2018 but the Irish sports star claimed they had consensual sex.  
  
Speaking after the verdicts Hand, 35, told reporters: “I hope my story is a reminder that no matter how afraid you might be: Speak up, you have a voice and keep on fighting for justice.  
  
She thanked her family including her daughter Freya.  
  
“She has given me so much strength and courage over the last six years throughout this nightmare to keep on pushing forward for justice.  
  
“I want to show Freya and every other girl and boy that you can stand up for yourself if something happens to you – no matter who the person is – and justice will be served.”  
  
The standard of proof is lower in a civil case with the jury asked to decide the case on the balance of probabilities rather than on the basis that the prosecuction has proved the case beyond reasonable doubt.  
  
Although the jury found in Hand’s favour in connection with her accusation against McGregor, she lost an assault lawsuit against a second man.  
  
The court heard evidence over two weeks from witnesses including Hand who has no automatic right to anonymity in the case.  
  
Hand added that she had been “overwhelmed and touched by the support” she had received.  
  
“For every person who reached out to me -– a card, a letter, an email, everything –- it hasn’t gone unnoticed. Thank you, I really appreciate it so much,” she said.  
  
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