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Irish Court Upholds Civil Ruling Against McGregor in 2018 Rape Case

August 1, 2025

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DUBLIN – Conor McGregor has failed in his attempt to overturn a civil jury verdict which found that he raped a woman in a Dublin hotel room in December 2018. The Court of Appeal in Ireland on Thursday dismissed the former mixed martial arts fighter's appeal in full, leaving the original ruling unchanged.

The case was brought by Nikita Hand, who alleged that McGregor sexually assaulted her on 9 December 2018 after a work-related gathering. In November 2023, a High Court jury ruled in favour of Hand and awarded her €250,000 (£210,000) in damages.

McGregor, 36, denied all allegations, stating that the encounter was consensual and that he did not cause any injuries to the claimant.

His legal representatives argued on appeal that the trial judge had misdirected the jury by using the term “assault” instead of “sexual assault” when outlining the charges. However, Judge Brian O’Moore ruled that the jury had been sufficiently directed on the central allegation, stating, “The jury found as a fact that Mr McGregor had assaulted Ms Hand by raping her.”

The defence also challenged the admissibility of certain cross-examination questions concerning McGregor’s “no comment” responses during a Garda (Irish police) interview. That argument was also rejected by the appeal judges.

Hand alleged during the trial that she and a friend had met McGregor after her office Christmas party and were taken to a party at a hotel penthouse. She claimed that drugs and alcohol were present, and that McGregor later brought her to a separate room, where the alleged assault occurred.

Medical evidence was presented at trial, including photographs of injuries taken at a sexual assault treatment unit the following day. McGregor was not present at Thursday’s hearing.

The Court of Appeal’s decision finalises the civil proceedings. No further legal avenues remain unless new grounds for appeal are established.