

Russian F1 Driver Loses Latest Fight Against Sanctions

By [AFP](#)

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Nikita Mazepin **Sergei Bobylev/TASS**

Russian Formula One driver Nikita Mazepin has lost the latest round of his High Court battle after being subjected to sanctions following the invasion of Ukraine.

Mazepin used to race for Haas, but the F1 team "terminated its relationship" with him soon after Russia started the war in Ukraine last year.

The 24-year-old has not driven for a F1 team since then and has taken legal action against British Foreign Secretary James Cleverly in a bid to get the sanctions lifted.

A judge is due to oversee a trial on July 19, but Mazepin's lawyers asked a High Court hearing in London to suspend sanctions in the interim.

That would have allowed Mazepin to travel to Britain and begin negotiations with Formula 1 teams based in the UK as soon as possible.

However, the judge dismissed the application by Mazepin's legal team on Thursday.

Judges have heard that Mazepin and his father Dmitry, a Russian businessman who owns chemical products manufacturer Uralchem, were made subject to sanctions in March 2022.

Mazepin and his father are "subject to an asset freeze and travel ban".

Lawyers representing the Government said sanctions were a "key aspect" of Britain's attempts to "address the situation" in Ukraine.

They raised concern about what the public perception would be if Mazepin's application was granted.

"The claimant is a relatively prominent public figure and a racing driver," the judge said.

"I accept that the perception may arise, at least in some sections of the public, that there are always ways around the UK sanctions regime."

The judge said he was "quite satisfied" that the balance of evidence weighed against granting interim relief.

Theoretically, drivers from Russia and Belarus can compete as "neutral" drivers in Formula One.

But Mazepin, the only Russian driver, was dropped by Haas shortly before the start of the 2022 season.

F1 also dropped the Sochi Grand Prix from its 2022 schedule and canceled plans for annual races to be held in St Petersburg.

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