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## Dixie Chicks

Martie Maguire talks to CMP

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## As Dixie Chicks get ready for their London date this month, Rob Patterson talks to Chick Martie Maguire and recalls the trio's rise to the top.



Let's face it. Musical success doesn't come much bigger or better than it has for Dixie Chicks. Over the course of what is now three multi-million selling albums, they've had a chance to get used to it as well as deal with some of the problems success presents. But take Chick Martie Maguire back to her thoughts in the group's earliest days, and she still remains stunned and happily surprised by the group's incredible achievements and good fortune.

The year is 1990. The scene is the Hyatt Hotel in Austin, Texas during an afternoon in mid March. The South by SouthWest Music & Media Conference, at the time just a few more years out of its infancy than Dixie Chicks, has filled the hotel's conference rooms with several hundred folks. In the lobby atrium, on a small stage, a new all-woman acoustic band from Dallas performs a tasty blend of bluegrass and

western music.

With genuine instrumental proficiency, delightfully charming harmonies and a knack for visual packaging with their spiffy neo-western outfits, the newly hatched Dixie Chicks caught this listener's eyes and ears and left a firm impression.

But if the future had tapped me on the shoulder and whispered in my ear to say that, by the end of the decade, this group would be one of the biggest things in country as well as pop music, I'd still have scoffed at the notion.

And if her fate had flashed before Martie Maguire that day, her response would have been even more doubtful. "No way," she says she would have thought back then, laughing heartily at the vision. "I really never expected this at all."

Not that she's complaining, mind you. As Dixie Chicks ease back into performing with a rare UK show this month after a few years of professional

respite for some well-earned rest – as well as marriages, babies, and a now-settled dispute over royalties with their record label – Maguire sounds positively ebullient. But where she expected to be by now is a bit of a different place than where she ended up.

"I figured I'd play music for a while," she remembers, "but then eventually I'd end up having a family and kind of being like my mother: teaching and getting my kids involved in music. And maybe playing some on the side. This is not at all what I expected. But, then again, I really love what I am doing instead."

And even if fiddler and mandolinist Maguire isn't (yet) a mom, the title of the new Dixie Chicks album, *Home*, still says it all for Maguire and her bandmates – her banjo and dobro playing sister Emily Robison and singer Natalie Maines. In recent years, the once Dallas-based act shifted their

