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DIXIE CHICKS

BY CYNDI HOELZLE

They're everywhere, vamping on magazine covers and raising eyebrows at awards shows. In just a few short years, the Dixie Chicks have gone from being a little-known secret to cultural icons, all the while staying true to their Country roots. Their devil-may-care attitude, striking good looks and dead-on musicianship have struck a chord: The Chicks are the kind of women guys dream about—and girls want to invite to a slumber party.

They're also known for saying and doing whatever pops into their heads. "We have a lot of fun, we do a lot of crazy, goofy things," says fiddler Martie Seidel. "That is just us being us, and some people might say, 'Don't do that again!' Sometimes they're right—we shouldn't do it again. But to me, it's just being honest."

Though the fashion spreads tend to focus on their outfits and hairstyles, the Chicks say they don't mind, now that their musical prowess has been established. In fact, their outrageous clothes and sassy attitudes have brought in many teen and preteen fans who have never seen women play traditional instruments before.

"It's so cool," says lead singer Natalie Maines of

Emily Erwin Robison: "We love bluegrass music, and we weren't ashamed of being dorks about it. Every weekend when I was in high school, we went to bluegrass festivals. We had no social life."

their young audiences who show up in droves wearing "Chicks Rule" t-shirts and feather boas. "Young girls and girls our age were definitely the audience we hoped for. We want young girls to see us on stage being successful, and have the same ambition and drive in whatever it is they want to do. When they see how well Martie and Emily can pick, hopefully it will be an inspiration. We want to encourage women to pick up instruments."

Remember the commercial with the women's basketball team running a full court press in fashionable pumps? That's nothing compared to the workout the Chicks perform onstage, rocking out in high heels and velvet hip-huggers. Of course, when it came time to record their albums, they played all the fiddle, dobro,



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