

With record-breaking sales of their debut album, *Wide Open Spaces*, reaching eight million copies and counting, the Dixie Chicks have secured their spot in country music history as having the best-selling release by a duo or group. Their sophomore effort, *Fly*, is quickly following in the same direction. The trio, made up of Natalie Maines and sisters Martie Seidel and Emily Robison, admit that their level of success has taken them somewhat by surprise.

Country Song Roundup: *At what point did you stop and think, "We've really made it"?*

Emily Robison: Being on stage with Sheryl Crow at Central Park, I think, was one of those things you never

DIXIE CHICKS YOUNG AT HEART

BY MARGY HOLLAND

CSR: *With fame often comes tabloid reports, and you seem to be getting your share lately. How does that affect you?*

ER: They mainly end up being about Natalie's personal life. At this point I still think it's so novel to us that we enjoy it. Well, I still enjoy it because it's not about me.

MS: I think you get to a point that you realize it's human nature when people put you up there at the top the first thing they want to do is tear you down, so we're prepared for that I think.

CSR: *Events such as Lilith Fair have brought your music to the mainstream. Because you have had such a tremendous response with so much crossover appeal, some fans are concerned that your devotion to country*



The Dixie Chicks (from right), Emily Robison, Natalie Maines and Martie Seidel: "When you're in country music, you don't expect to go outside the boundaries of country music."

expected to happen. When you're in country music you don't expect to go outside the boundaries of country music, so it was a huge honor for us to be on that show. I remember looking over at Martie and she's sitting between Keith Richards and Eric Clapton and I'm like, "We have arrived."

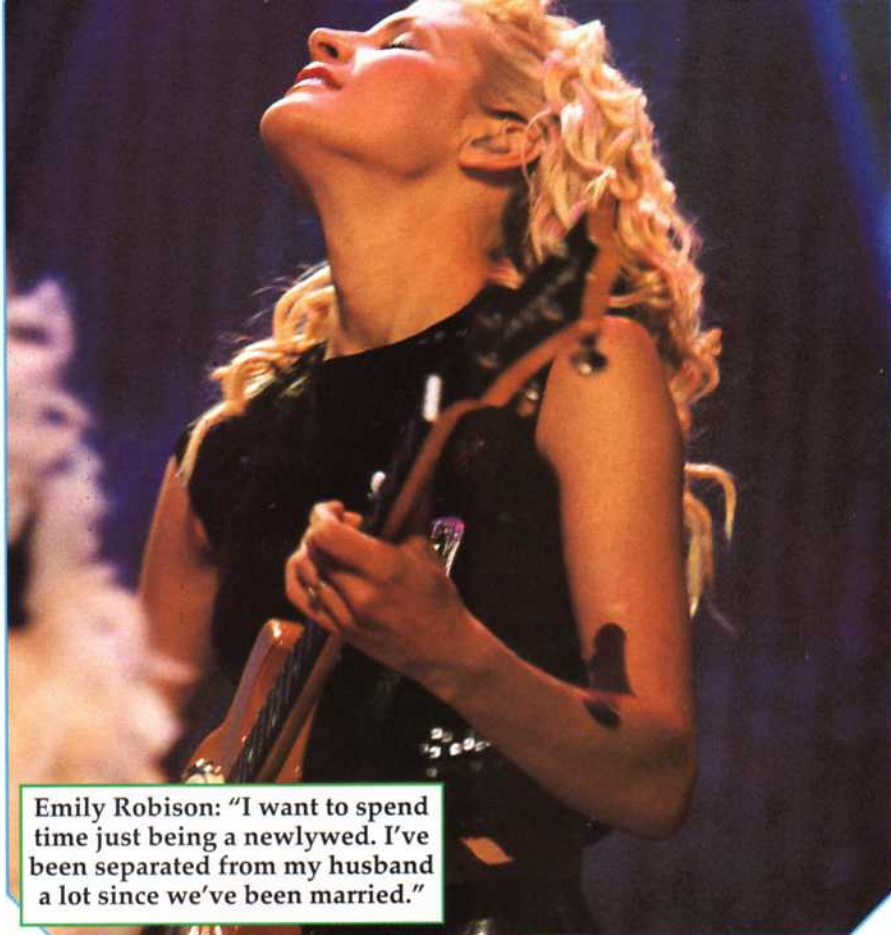
CSR: *Do you ever feel like the success and the fame is just too much too soon?*

Martie Seidel: Sometimes I feel a little uncomfortable winning so many things or achieving so many things so fast, not because I don't think we can handle it, but sometimes I worry about the perception of just rising so fast that either we personally

would have a hard time with it or we haven't really had enough time to earn it. I know that we've been together for ten years, but at this level we haven't been together very long. Sometimes I think maybe the press would be nicer or the critics would be nicer if we didn't have everything handed to us so quickly. I do feel like we deserve it. We work hard and we try to be an all-around act in every way and we give of our lives to do this and put everything else on the back burner, which could be a dangerous thing.

music will wane.

MS: We know we're not going to actively promote ourselves in any other format but country music. We don't want to spread ourselves too thin. We are true to this format and if other stations want to play our songs, it's wonderful and great. I think it's understood that once you've sold that many records, you are crossing over into other audiences that don't just listen to country. We think that's great for country music, but we want to be always waving the country flag. We weren't going on Lilith Fair to try to be something else. People would ask us, "Well, are you changing your set? Are you throwing in different songs for the



Emily Robison: "I want to spend time just being a newlywed. I've been separated from my husband a lot since we've been married."

Lilith audience?" and we were like, "No, we're gonna hit them over the head with what we do best."

CSR: *One thing you have changed over the years is your style. What prompted the drastic change in fashion?*

MS: It really reflected what kind of music we were playing at the time. We were playing acoustic music—cowgirl music—and we were doing a lot of corporate shows where they'd bring in people from all over the world and they wanted a taste of Texas. When Natalie joined the band, she said, "I'll come along and join the band but I'm not wearing those ugly clothes." Emily and I were kind of relieved because wool gabardine is just not very comfortable or practical in Texas. I think we were glad to get out of those clothes, those costumes. I saved every single one though 'cause, y'know, anybody who looks at pictures of themselves in the past has to chuckle.

CSR: *Has all the success challenged your friendships with one another?*

ER: We always kind of say it's more of a sisterhood than friendship because you're always going to have those times when you disagree or you have fights, but there's no leaving and there's no giving up. You have to resolve whatever it is and move on. We all grew up with households full of sisters. We understand that concept, but also just being in the place that we are, you have to go through things. The three of us are the only ones who have the same perspective on things. We can cry together, we can laugh together, and it's like a marriage. It's that

Natalie Maines told the other Chicks, "I'll come along and join the band, but I'm not wearing those ugly clothes."

bond.

Natalie Maines: And the longer we're together, the less we fight. We used to be able to count our fights, usually every three months, and this whole year there hasn't been anything. You just grow, you trust each other more, and you have more respect for each other. In the beginning, you're not quite sure if the other two have the same thing in mind that you do. As you grow together, you realize you all have the same goal in mind.

CSR: *You will all be taking some well-deserved time off next year. What are your plans for the break?*

NM: I'm traveling and actually enjoying it. I'm going to see places that I want to see, and learn French and take cooking and going to have a private yoga instructor and a million things. My list is way too long. I'm sure the five and a half months will pass, and I'll still be watching Jerry Springer.

ER: I'm interested in getting more involved with the World Wildlife Fund and maybe going out on a trip and seeing some of the projects they're doing around the world. Also [I want to spend time] just being a newlywed. I've been separated from my husband a lot since we've been married, and just want to be a homebody and do the simple things.

MS: I think I'd like to spend a lot of time in Nashville. I really enjoyed writing with a lot of the songwriters I got to write with, so I definitely want to do that. I want to learn to play the guitar; I want to get better at playing. I want to do a lot of musical things, because I'm really going to miss it. I'm going to have withdrawals, but I'm not ready to pack up a suitcase and go on any

Martie Seidel: "I want to do a lot of musical things, because I'm really going to miss it."

