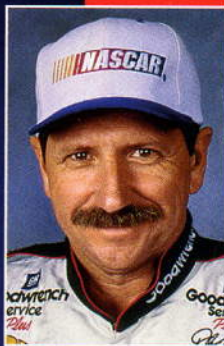


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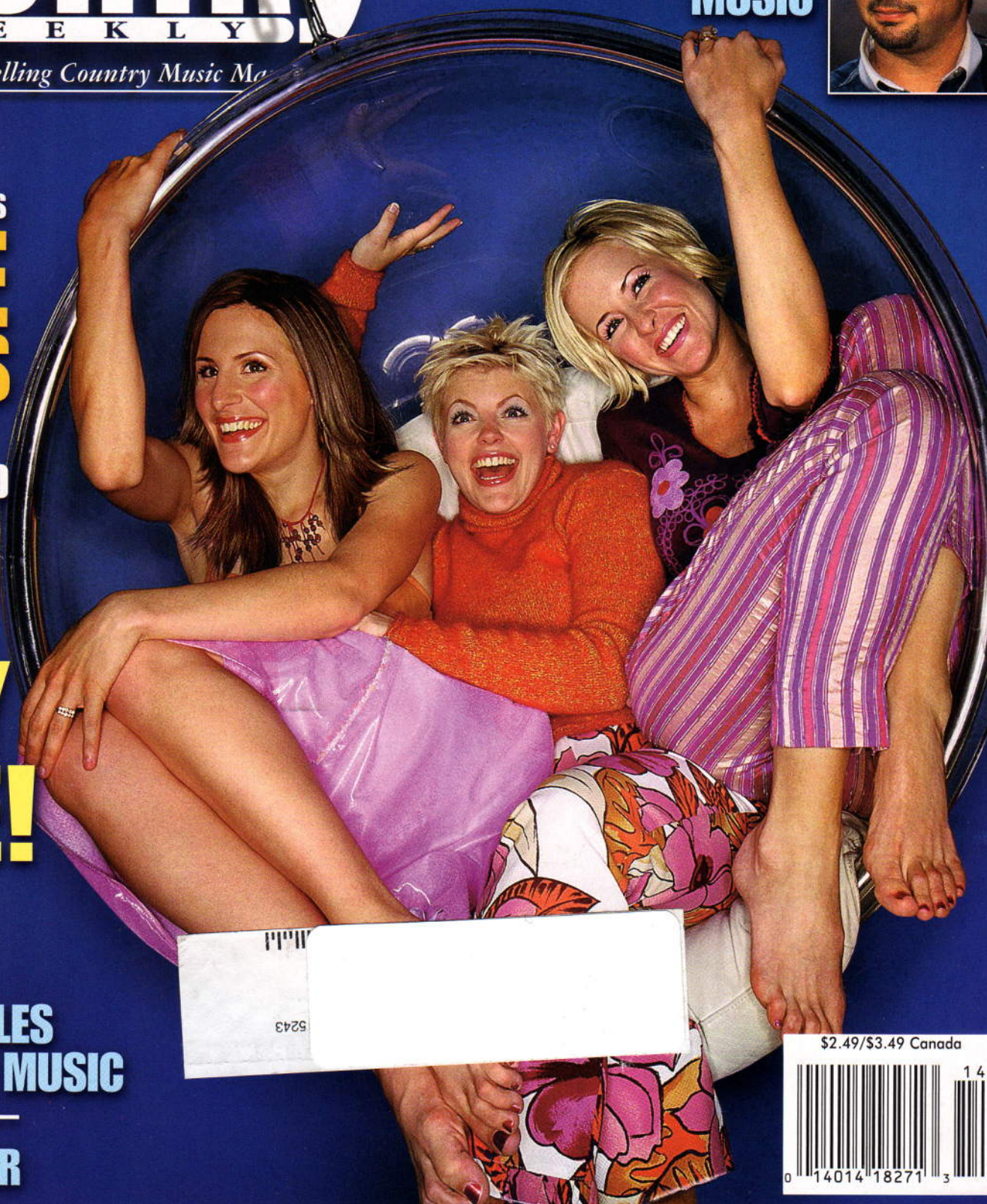
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DIXIE *Lane*

The Chicks — and their men — make their nests in the Lone Star State

It *always* comes back to babies. When you talk to the Dixie Chicks nowadays, the conversation, without fail, turns toward the stork.

Story by Larry Holden

Natalie: *My baby's good. After I got passed the initial tired stage, I'm good, too. Now I can hardly wait for little Jack Slade, we'll call him Slade, to make his entrance somewhere 'round March 25.*

Emily: *Charlie and I are trying to have a baby. But things were kind of tough until I had an operation. Now I'm more than ready, and things are in nature's hands.*

Martie: *I want a baby so bad. But right now my maternal instincts are centered on being an instant baby-sitter for Natalie. I even told her I wouldn't charge, I may even pay her.*

And when the trio's conversation goes beyond babies, the topic that naturally follows is their men.

For Natalie, that's hubby Adrian Pasdar, star of the new television series *Mysterious Ways*. He and Natalie met at Emily's wedding in May of 1999; she was a bridesmaid, he was a groomsman.

For Emily, it's Charlie Robison, the popular Texas singer/songwriter. They were introduced at Nashville's Fan Fair in 1998.

And for Martie, it's her beau, Gareth Maguire, the Irish teacher she met at Natalie's sister's wedding. He was the best man. (So if Gareth and Martie *do* tie the knot, Martie will be related to Natalie, making the Chicks completely interconnected by either blood or marriage.)

But back to babies.

"We're all waiting for Natalie's baby," confesses Emily. "And she's taking it all in stride. Every time I look at her belly, I'm like, 'Oh, my God,' and I'm always asking her questions, like 'What's it feel like?' She answers, 'Oh, it's no big deal.' She's *very* strong willed."

Natalie laughs. "But my memory has slipped, though the baby books say that's normal."

Her hands, normally tiny, are swollen because of the pregnancy. "Yep," she admits, "my hands look like the Hamburger Helper man."

Emily says Natalie is waffling between natural childbirth and drug-assisted childbirth. But she believes Natalie will choose the natural way. "She definitely feels pain differently than I do. If we go to have our legs waxed, I'm screaming, and

