

12.4.00

MUSIC

In the two years since their debut album, Music Awards, toured for 25 months and

# ON the FLY

IT'S FOUR HOURS BEFORE SHOWTIME AND THE DIXIE Chicks are still in their pajamas. The pop-country trio are backstage at Pittsburgh's Mellon Arena, a stop on their six-month national tour supporting *Fly*, their Grammy-winning second album, which has sold 7 million copies. Since they rarely step out in public looking anything less than rock-star glamorous, it's shocking to see them hanging around, without a bit of makeup, in sweatpants and T-shirts.

"We got up so late today!" says Emily Robison, 28, the group's down-to-earth master of the banjo and dobro (a metal-and-wood acoustic guitar). She's almost unrecognizable with her wavy dark-brown hair pulled back in a ponytail. She and her sister — smart, sensible blond fiddle whiz Martie Seidel, 31 — have started the day with their usual routine: 90 minutes of yoga with Vanda Mikoloski, their traveling instructor and masseuse.

Instead of joining the workout, lead singer Natalie Maines is spending the afternoon in bed on the Chicks' tour bus. Yesterday was her twenty-sixth birthday, and

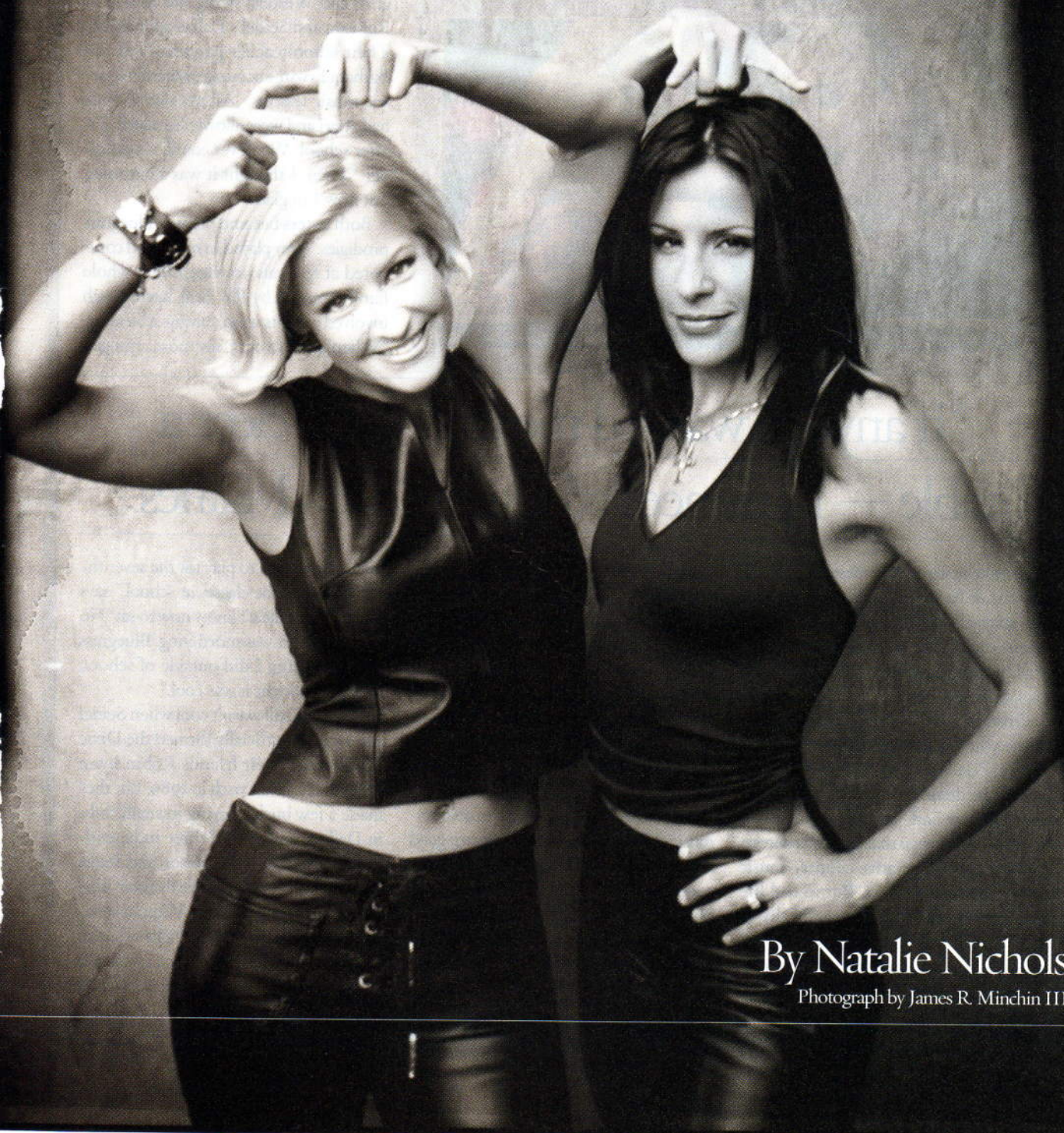


HEART OF DIXIE: Natalie Maines, Martie Seidel and Emily Robison photographed in Nampa, Idaho, in June

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the Dixie Chicks have won nine Country  
gotten divorced, married and pregnant

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By Natalie Nichols

Photograph by James R. Minchin III

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