

# COUNTRY

W E E K L Y

The World's #1 Selling Country Music Magazine

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TRAVIS TRITT PLAYS JAILBIRD



## Hot to Trot

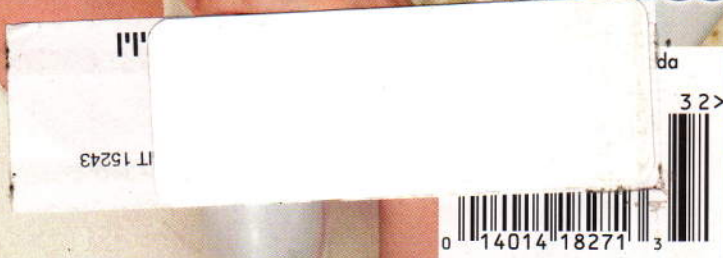
On the road with the  
**DIXIE CHICKS**  
PLUS the scoop on  
Natalie's QUICKIE WEDDING!

**INSIDE**  
Guess who  
else got  
married!

'Urban Cowboy'  
20 years later

Alabama

Patty  
Loveless



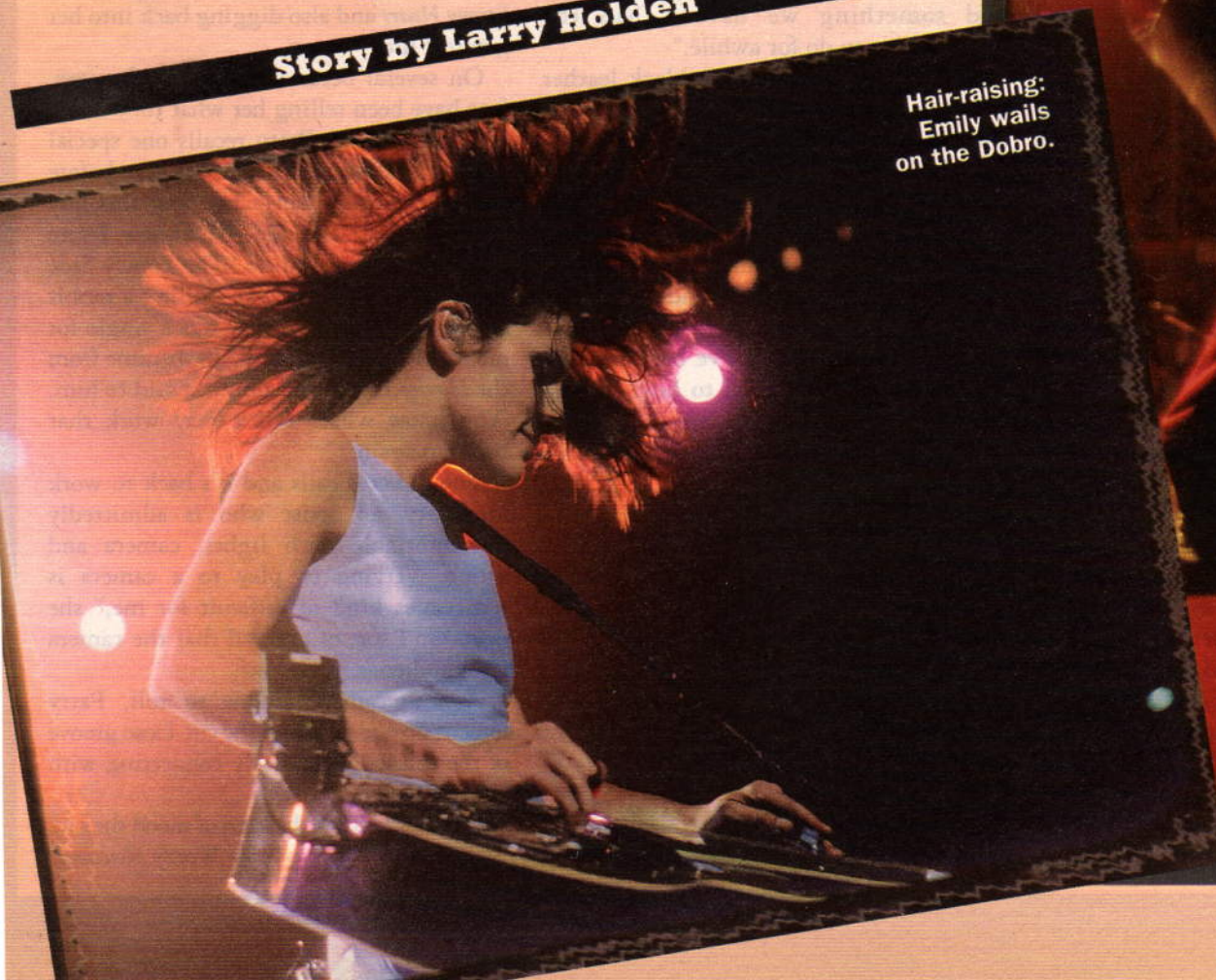


The skinny on their new whirlwind

# CHICKS ON THE RUN

Story by Larry Holden

Hair-raising:  
Emily wails  
on the Dobro.





# tour — and Natalie's quickie wedding

The snow must  
go on: Natalie  
goes electric.

She came,  
she sawed:  
Martie fiddles.

*"It brings tears to my eyes  
knowing we created this whole tour.  
Seeing our buses and trucks pull in. Watching the riggers.  
The stage going up in each arena. It's amazing to see our dream come to life."*

— Natalie Maines

**E**merald waves lap at the stretch of beach next to the Mississippi Coast Coliseum in Biloxi. Inside the cavernous arena, excitement fills the air like an electrical charge as the Dixie Chicks and their team of 60 musicians, stagehands, roadies and riggers get ready for the next concert on their first-ever headlining tour.

Only hours before showtime, staff members scurry about. The lights are hoisted toward the ceiling. Stage sections are matched like a jigsaw puzzle. The sound system is tweaked.

The stars are doing their own thing to prepare. Natalie Maines gets a massage, Emily Robison checks out an accordion, and Martie Seidel has her hair styled.

Backstage, the group's pets are also doing their own thing. Emily's Blue Heeler, Buddy,

roams freely and Ralph, Natalie's Bulldog, plays basketball. (Okay, so he puts his mouth on a basketball and pushes it around the wardrobe room.)

"We wanted a tour that country music hasn't seen before," declares Natalie. "In everything we do we try to be a leader and not a follower. We wanted *our* tour to be different."

Is it ever! They hired a designer from Cirque de Soleil, the internationally acclaimed French

PHOTOS COURTESY OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT



All of the Chicks' U.S. tour dates have been sellouts, and they've already extended the tour through December.



## DIXIE CHICKS

circus, to create the stage. Rock concert lighting gives the show high drama. But it's the Chicks' infectious music and the chemistry between the three women and their audience, that's truly powering the *Fly* Tour.

Just weeks into their schedule, it's clear there's no hotter act on the road. With the first 17 shows under their belt, including five Canadian dates, they've grossed more than \$8 million. And all the U.S. shows have been sellouts.

What's more, multiple show dates were added in Los Angeles, New York and Washington, and the 85-date tour has been extended through December.

"The crowds have been awesome," acknowledges Emily. "It's everything I hoped it would be."

Meanwhile, the Chicks' debut album *Wide Open Spaces* is approaching 10 million in sales, and their follow-up, *Fly*, is closing in on six million. Their brand of country has captured the hearts and minds of pop, rock and alternative country listeners everywhere.

"If playing the music we love crosses over and gains listeners from other types of music, that's great," notes Martie. "But we're not intentionally trying to cross

over. We're country performers and we're *staying* country."

The trio's choice of opening acts reflects their roots. Early in the tour their fans saw alternative country's Patty Griffin, and tonight it'll be bluegrass great Ricky Skaggs. In October, audiences will see

the legendary Willie Nelson.

As fans stream into the coliseum, the Chicks' stage outfits are retrieved from their new bus, an ordinary-looking tan Provost. But the bus' interior – entirely designed by Natalie – is anything but ordinary.

There's a lounge with hardwood floors, a kitchen, bath and full-size slate shower. Each bedroom has a double bed, TV, VCR, DVD system and its own satellite hookup, so each Chick can watch something different. The bedrooms also have their own sinks and mirrors.

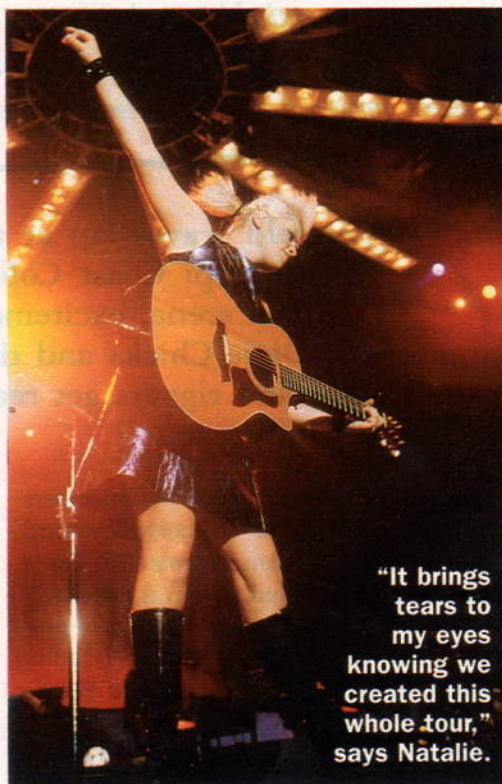
Reflecting the trio's individual personalities, the decor is also colorful.

"My bedroom has blood-red brocade fabric on the wall," notes Martie. "There are incredible Tiffany-like lamps on the wall with shades of purple, blue and red. Lots of pillows and a velvet comforter."

"Mine has a true boudoir feeling," confides Emily. "The wall fabric has jewel tones – reds, dark greens and golds. It's like you're walking into a Victorian suite."

Natalie's bedroom is downright funky – in a chic way, of course. "I found this black and white material with flies all over it," she explains. "It's not gaudy, it's cute."

And now it's 8 p.m. – showtime! The 12,000-seat arena is packed when the lights go down.



"It brings tears to my eyes knowing we created this whole tour," says Natalie.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT





# CHICK ADDS ROOSTER TO COOP

**W**hen lead singer Natalie Maines and beau Adrian Pasdar said their "I dos" June 24 at a Vegas wedding chapel, it seemed like a spur-of-the-moment decision.

But it wasn't.

"We planned it for two weeks," reveals Natalie. "My parents knew because Adrian asked for my hand. And his parents knew. Emily and Martie knew a few days in advance. Hardly anyone else did, until right before the ceremony."

Natalie's stylist helped her get Adrian's ring and a one-of-a-kind vintage champagne-tinted gown of Austrian crystals, designed by Giorgio di Saint Angelo. "It had a hood and was very 1930s Hollywood," explains



Natalie. "It weighed about 18 pounds!"

Following the Chicks' show at the Thomas and Mack Arena, the couple went to the famous A Little White Wedding Chapel on the Vegas strip.

Pastor Ann married them in a simple \$55 ceremony, the least expensive no-frills package offered, which includes use of the chapel, candle-light service, traditional music and the minister. The groom wore a steel gray Prada suit with a black, ruffled Gucci shirt.

Despite the quickie wedding, "Adrian and I took our vows very seriously," confides Natalie, who met the actor at bandmate Emily's May 1999 wedding to singer/songwriter Charlie Robison. "The service we had was very romantic. We made our wedding just about me and him. We wanted our vows to be heard only by each other."

After the ceremony, the happy couple bought matching chapel T-shirts with purple hearts. They then joined Emily and fellow band member Martie Seidel, along with the crew and the *Fly Tour* entourage, for a couple hours of gambling at Mandalay Bay Casino before heading to Salt Lake City, the next tour stop.

"We played blackjack and roulette – and amazingly we all won!" declares Natalie with a laugh. Emily was up \$335, Martie \$210 and the newlyweds racked up \$740.



Ricky Skaggs kicks off the show with a pumpin' instrumental tribute to bluegrass legend Bill Monroe.

While the stage is readied for the Chicks, fans try to win front row seats in a special contest. A girl at an earlier concert attempted to enhance her chances with the crowd during an audience-judged dance contest by lifting her top to give them a pair of reasons to vote for her – in addition to her boogie skills.

Tonight's contest is tamer – finding out who knows factoids about the Chicks. Several fans in back rows end up right next to the stage.

While Lenny Kravitz's rock hit "Fly Away" blares over the sound system, a five-story-tall curtain made like a pair of blue jeans conceals the stage. Suddenly, the zipper slides down, parting the jeans' fly – revealing the Chicks as they launch into "Ready To Run." The roar of the crowd is deafening.

The gals are ravishing. Natalie is wearing a metallic blue leather dress and matching boots. Martie is in black leather pants and a blue top. Emily is sporting sparkly white pants and a teal top.

**T**he horseshoe-shaped stage with elevated tiers embraces the rockin' six-man band. A pair of attached circular stages juts into the audience. Above the stage are three giant video screens.

As Natalie moves to the front of the stage, submerged cooling fans float her hair extensions above her head. A few nights before, one of the faux tresses fell off during a show.

Natalie held them up to the audience. "You didn't think these were *real*, did you?" she asked the crowd.

Serving up hit after hit – from "There's Your Trouble" to "Cold Day In July" – the three entertainers whirl across the stage. But Natalie is the marathon winner, covering more ground than a Texas twister.

Between songs, Martie announces that the mayor of Dallas, where it all began for the group, will be naming a street for them – Dixie Chicks Way.

Ricky Skaggs returns to the stage to join the Chicks for a rousing ditty. "Sure wish Ricky had breasts," Natalie declares. "We'd ask him to be in the band in a heartbeat!" The audience cheers loudly.

The Chicks bring the high-energy pace down to an intimate setting when they gather center-stage on a sofa. It's time to reel off some gentle ballads. The audience laps it up.

Just before they sing the inspiring "Cowboy Take Me Away," Natalie tells the crowd,





## DIXIE CHICKS

"Never accept less than this song when it comes to love."

Minutes later, Natalie shifts from romantic to rowdy. "This is our favorite part of the show, where we get to humiliate ourselves," she announces, as youthful images of all three fill the video screens. With each photo, the Chicks proceed to make fun of each other's kiddie clothes, braces and "mall bangs."

A few songs later, thanking the crowd, the Chicks exit the stage. Chants for their return rattle the rafters. The two-song encore has the threesome dancing out into the audience on "Goodbye Earl," and "Wide Open Spaces" ties the perfect bow on the concert.

As the crowd pours into the

Mississippi night, the Chicks prepare to take the first of the tour's planned "no-burn-out" 10-day breaks.

"We'll go our separate ways for a few days and have normal lives," explains Emily. "We'll go to the grocery store, pick up dog poop and do *real* things." Emily's heading to her San Antonio, Texas, home to be with her singer/songwriter husband Charlie Robison.

**M**artie's boyfriend is flying in from Ireland, where he lives. "It's funny that Natalie met her husband at Emily's wedding, and I met my boyfriend at Natalie's sister's wedding," she says. "He was the best man. His brother is married to Natalie's sister."

Natalie has her sights set on a

mini-honeymoon with her new hubby Adrian Pasdar (see sidebar). The 35-year-old actor has recently been in Vancouver, Canada, starring in the new PAX-TV series *Mysterious Ways*.

"Adrian plays an archaeology professor who investigates miracles and unexplained phenomena," says Natalie, pride lacing her words.

As the lights go out in the coliseum and the Chicks head to their bus, Natalie is talking about wanting to have babies.

Soon? "We'll see," she nods with a smile. Then she realizes the comment could be misunderstood. "Hey, I *didn't* get married because I'm pregnant," she quickly adds. "And I'm not pregnant now!"

Natalie's not counting her chickens, you might say ... well, you know the rest!

