



The Pussycat Dolls in their heyday: Kimberly says it was a tense time for them all

'NICOLE KEPT HER BULIMIA behind closed doors'

Got To Dance's Kimberly Wyatt talks frankly about Nicole Scherzinger and The Pussycat Dolls

Sexy girlband The Pussycat Dolls embodied female empowerment. They put drooling men in their place with their tough-edged image, and following on from the Spice Girls, gave us our greatest girl-power anthem, *Don't Cha*. But behind the scenes, the band was dogged by rumours of bitter rifts. When we catch up with former band member Kimberly Wyatt, she confesses: 'It was a very difficult situation... [being part of] The Pussycat Dolls was like a boot camp.'

THE BAND'S BITTER SPLIT

Kimberly, 32, says she's still in contact with Nicole Scherzinger via email, but confesses they haven't seen each other in 'quite some time', after Nicole contacted Kimberly on Twitter to congratulate her on her February wedding to model Max Rogers. As we ask Kimberly if she was aware of Nicole's battle with bulimia, which she spoke about recently, she is evasive but reveals: 'I'm sure everybody was going through their ups and downs, and definitely Nicole herself,' before admitting

the girls hadn't been aware of her illness. 'Ultimately, eating disorders are [illnesses] that people keep behind closed doors. 'It was a lot of pressure being in the group but we were an amazing support system for one another and I think all of us had our own battles. Some of us just fought them in different ways.' During her appearance on 2012's *I'm A Celebrity Get Me Out Of Here*, fellow Pussycat Ashley Roberts, 32, explosively confessed that the band's sudden split in 2010 was down to the controlling ways of lead singer Nicole, 36. The tension began when their songs were listed as The Pussycat Dolls featuring Nicole Scherzinger and, ultimately, this proved the final straw for the group. Nicole commented at the time: 'I love those girls. They're like my sisters, but people don't even know the story. They have no idea. I was in the centre because I was the one singing.'

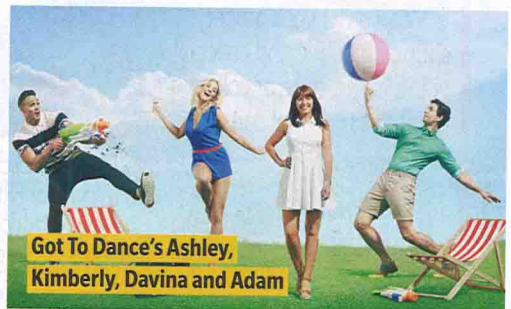
HEADED IN A NEW DIRECTION

Both Ashley and Nicole have released solo material since leaving the band, and Kimberly is back on the judging panel in the new series of *Got To Dance*, alongside Diversity's Ashley Banjo and Adam Garcia. Of her new-found independence, she tells us: '[My life] has changed completely since [leaving the band] because I'm now captain of my own ship. 'When I was in the Dolls, I was a piece

in a puzzle. Since then, I've been able to do my own thing. I've found myself in another country, I've married and my life is completely different now!' Kimberly is also channelling the skills she learnt in the band into her judging role on the popular Sky1 dance show and offering her invaluable advice to contestants, who are hoping for a taste of The Pussycat Dolls' worldwide fame. Kimberly explains: 'You have to be supportive and make them realise that ultimately, this has to be fun as well as hard work.' '[As a judge], you have to realise the amount of pressure a kid is going to have to face. They're going on stage in front of so many people and competing to be the best they can. 'You may make it, you may not. You just have to go out there and do your best.'

Lauren Hills

Got To Dance, Saturdays, 8pm, on Sky1



Got To Dance's Ashley, Kimberly, Davina and Adam