

Chopper Saves Two Aviators

DA NANG — Within minutes after being hit and ejecting from their observation plane, two Army aviators were picked up and returned to safety thanks to the fast and sure reaction of a rescue crew from the 37th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron from Da Nang AB.

Army Capt. Norman H. Svarrer, Edison, N.J., pilot and Sgt. Robert W. Christiansen, Champagne, Ill., observer, were hit while flying a photo reconnaissance mission about three miles from the Kham Duc Civilian Irregular Defense Group camp recently. With their number one engine aflame, and the aircraft losing altitude rapidly, they were forced to eject.

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THE HH-3E "Jolly Green Giant" helicopter from Da Nang was scrambled and on the way to the scene within seconds after receiving the call for help. Maj. Robert D. Shular, Laguna Hills, Calif., helicopter pilot, aided in pinpointing the downed fliers through the efforts of Captain Svarrer's wingman who pointed out the chutes. The downed pilot was the first sighted. He was on a slope with a 60 degree slant which made the approach more difficult. Major Shular waited for a covering Spad to lay down suppressive fire and smoke throughout the rescue.

Covering fire from the Spads was so effective that not a single shot was fired at the helicopter during either pick up.