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CLAYTON TELLS KNR COWHER IS NOT INTERESTED IN CLEVELAND; PIOLI NEXT ON RADAR?

CLEVELAND – ESPN NFL analyst John Clayton joined Greg Brinda on ESPN 850 WKNR Tuesday night to discuss the Browns' struggles this year and the impending coaching search. Cleveland is expected to fire head coach Romeo Crennel at season's end.

When asked about potential front office or coaching changes, Clayton told Brinda that "there is a process that has been going on for two to three weeks through back channels. The Bill Cowher thing has come and gone. Bill apparently is not coming to Cleveland. Has there been a direct conversation? Has there been an interview? No, but there are enough people talking to both sides. They will talk to him after the season. They will make him his offer. He's probably going to turn it down."

While Cowher appears to be Cleveland's first choice, Clayton offered a glimpse into owner Randy Lerner's next coach or front office option.

"Now, we are at Plan B," Clayton said. "Marty Schottenheimer is one possibility. Scott Pioli is another possibility."

When asked why Pioli, the Patriots' Vice President of Player Personnel, would be interested in a job in Cleveland, Clayton explained that New England is "not his shop. It's Bill Belichick's shop...Scott has been in Cleveland. I think it's a great organization. It's a great owner."

Pioli served as a pro personnel assistant for the Browns from 1992-95.

Full audio of the interview can be found on <http://www.espn-cleveland.com>.

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