TABLESAW CROSSCUT SLED

A very basic, but easily essential jig in the shop. The crosscut sled can be a huge help in making accurate and tearout free cross cuts with larger stock.

Using either new pieces or leftover scraps from the shop, this project can easily be built in a matter of an hour or so with little or no effort.
The pieces pictured here that I used for my sled are a 3/8" thick piece of plywood that's about 2/3rds the depth of the table, a length of hardwood for a fence and a piece of UHMW I purchased from Woodcraft.

My first step is to cut the UHMW to use as a runner on the base of the sled. The UHMW is easy to shape and cut and also decreases any friction between the sled and the table top.

Once the piece of UHMW is cut to the correct width, I clean up the edges with a block plane to ensure it rides in the miter slot with ease. But at the same time there should be very little if any side to side movement.

Once the piece if shaped I predrill and countersink the holes for screws. One hole in the front, back and the middle are good locations.

Using factory edges, I run one against the fence and the other one facing me. The overall length should be long enough to overhang the blade.

The runner is pulled forward and clamped to the plywood. This allows me to attach the screw securely in place.

After the screw is attached, I push the sled forward and attach the screw at the other end. All while the factory edge is against the fence and the runner is still in the miter slot.

Once the front and rear screws are in place I can securely attach the middle screw and then here I added a few extra (a little overkill actually).

Now that the runner is secured it's time to cut an new edge on the sled. This new edge will be parallel with the blade and the miter slot.

With the new parallel edge it's time attach the fence. I start by screwing the fence with one screw. This gives me a pivot point from which I can make adjustments. So the next step is to ensure that the fence is perfectly perpendicular to the new parallel edge. This can be achieved with either a very reliable carpenter's square or a little geometry. Once it's squared drive a few more screws to secure it in place.

Here's the finished product, square and ready to cut!!!